

THE STEPFORD WIVES

Screenplay  
by  
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Shooting Script  
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FADE IN:

BEFORE TITLES:

1. INT.DESERTED NEW YORK APARTMENT - DAY - showing evidence that the occupants have recently moved out. It is obviously a large and expensive complex of rooms. A subjective camera searches through the empty rooms. Something - a dog? - runs through shot and disappears. And then, as camera continues to search, we see a woman standing to one side of a bare window. This is Joanna.

2. CLOSER - she stares down into the streets outside. She seems withdrawn. Then, without any undue flamboyance, she brings a camera up to her eye. It is a well-used black body Nikon with a 85mm lens on it. She focuses quickly on something below.

3. EFFECT SHOT - as though through the Nikon lens. An incident below that should typify the feel of the city. The images come into sharp focus. We hear the sound of the shutter being fired.

4. BACK TO JOANNA - as she automatically winds on, then shifts away from the window, and we see her full face for the first time. She is somewhat grimed from the exertions of moving day. We hear the sound of somebody else in the empty apartment.

5. FROM ANOTHER ROOM - her husband, Walter Eberhart, appears. He looks irritable. We bring him through the rooms to Joanna.

WALTER  
What're you doing? Did  
you check everything?

5 continued.

JOANNA  
I think so.

WALTER  
Where's Fred?

JOANNA  
I don't know.

WALTER  
Joanna, we're late as it  
is . . . Fred!

He leaves her and starts to search through  
the apartment. Left to herself, Joanna  
looks around once more, then exits.

6. PICK UP WALTER AGAIN -  
in another empty room. His eye goes to  
a half-open closet door. He crosses  
the room and looks inside the closet.

7. WE REVEAL -  
a dog at the back of the closet.

8. WALTER -  
moves in and picks up the dog.

WALTER  
Come on, Fred, don't be  
an old idiot.

As he straightens up he sees that there  
is still a mess of junk on one of the  
shelves.

WALTER  
Oh, Christ!

He does his best to collect it while  
holding the dog.

9. GO THE LOSBY OF THE APARTMENT BUILDING -  
as Joanna is exiting the building. The  
elevator man holds the door open for her.

ELEVATOR MAN  
Take care, Mrs Eberhart.  
Be happy.

JOANNA  
Thank you, Charley.

10 SHE STEPS INTO THE STREET -  
a station wagon is parked outside the entrance  
and behind this is a giant moving van. Two  
moving men are leaning against the machine,  
bored and spitballing. Joanna goes to the  
station wagon. Inside it, half hidden by  
debris, are her two small children, Kim and  
Amy.

11. BEHIND HER -  
the elevator man waves goodbye to the children.

12 THE CHILDREN -  
respond and wave back.

13. JOANNA -  
still in the same mood, looks up and down the  
street.

14 IN HER EYELINE -  
and some distance away, we see a young van  
taking a nude model from the back of a  
small pick-up truck. He has some difficulty  
with it and an arm drops off. Passers-by  
react.

15 BACK TO JOANNA -  
the camera comes up to her eye again and  
she fires off another shot of the incident.

16 THE CHILDREN -  
are also attracted to the incident. The  
smallest child has her thumb in her mouth.  
Like their mother they seem a long way away.

17 PICK UP WALTER -  
coming out of the building, his arms full  
of junk and the dog. The Elevator Man  
comes forward to open the door of the  
station wagon for him. Walter dumps the  
dog in the back with the children.

WALTER  
Take care of him, he's  
upset.

Joanna gets in her side.

WALTER  
You did a great job up  
there.

JOANNA  
Sorry. Thought I'd checked  
everything.

17 continued.

WALTER

Right, let's go.

The Elevator man is hovering. Walter fumbles for some money.

WALTER

Thanks for everything,  
Charley.

ELEVATOR

My pleasure, Mr. Eberhart.  
We shall miss you.

Walter gives the signal to the two moving men behind. He gets into the car, glances to the kids.

WALTER

All set back there?  
Thumb out.

AMY

We just saw a man carrying a naked lady.

WALTER

That's why we're moving to Stepford.

18 THE STATION WAGON -  
pulls out, followed by the moving van and

19-

30. WE START TO ROLL CREDITS -  
charting their progress out of the city along the West Side Highway. During the journey, at some point on the turnpike, they will pause to let the dog have a pee. During this Joanna will take a few more pictures as the children also stretch their legs.

31 AS THE LAST CREDIT -

fades we shall be coming into the road leading to Stepford Village. It's a long way in feel from Manhattan.

32 THE STATION WAGON AND THE MOVING VAN -  
pass a large building we shall later identify as The Men's Association.

33 A CUT OF WALTER -  
at this point. He indicates something on  
the opposite side of the street from The  
Mens' Association.

34 ANOTHER VIEW OF STEPFORD - DARIEN  
near-perfection.

35 AN ATTRACTIVE YOUNG POLICEMAN -  
passing the time of day with a simply  
gorgeous creature. He looks past her  
as Walter's station wagon and the moving  
van go by.

36 THE APPROACH TO THEIR NEW HOUSE -  
in an area of great beauty. The expensive  
houses are separated by lawns and trees.  
Tranquility. They turn into the driveway  
and pull up.

37 THE TWO CHILDREN -  
bound out and release Fred. They run towards  
the front door and try the handle. It opens  
and they go inside.

38 JOANNA AND WALTER -  
move towards the house.

WALTER  
They don't even have to  
lock the doors in Stepford  
- that's something, isn't  
it?

JOANNA  
How about that.

She walks slowly towards the house as  
Walter turns back to consult with the  
moving men.

39 INSIDE THE HOUSE -  
the children are climbing the bare stairs to  
find their respective rooms. Kim has her  
favourite doll (very ancient) with her  
and she walks into her room and shows it  
to the doll.

KIM  
This is where you're  
going to sleep tonight.

40 LATER - CHAOS -

Walter sandwiched in one corner of a room holding a phone to his ear.

WALTER (into phone)  
. . . Mrs Johnson, make up your mind. D'you want your husband back or the money? . . .

The moving men appear carrying a heavy piece of furniture.

LEAD MOVING MAN  
What's the word on this one?

WALTER  
. . . Just a minute, Mrs Johnson . . .

He pulls at the telephone cord while he reaches for a diagram. He consults this.

WALTER  
What number's that?

LEAD MOVING MAN  
Forty eight.

Walter looks at the diagram again.

WALTER  
Upstairs. Main bedroom.

LEAD MOVING MAN  
Terrific.

They move out as Walter goes back to Mrs Johnson.

41. PICK UP JOANNA -  
as she meets the moving men in the hallway.  
She has three mugs of coffee hooked in her fingers.

JOANNA  
Coffee?

SECOND MOVING MAN  
We can't drink on the job, lady, except beer.

They grunt up the stairway.

Moving men



42 LATER STILL -

Walter dumping some packing junk outside  
in the trash cans. He looks up.

43 GO TO WHAT HE SEES -

a very attractive woman in her early thirties  
who we will come to know as Carol van Sant  
is crossing the lawn between the two houses.  
She carries a large orange casserole.

44 WALTER STRAIGHTENS -

as Carol enters shot.

CAROL

Hi, I'm Carol van Sant.  
I just thought this might come  
in handy.

WALTER (taking casserole)  
That's really nice, thank  
you. I'm Walter Eberhart.  
My wife's just inside  
somewhere - I'm sure she'd  
like to . . .

(he calls)  
Darling! Joanna!

CAROL

Don't worry her. I know  
how much fun moving is.  
If you need anything else,  
please call - I'm just  
next door.

WALTER

Thanks again.

She goes. Walter looks after her. She  
is a very sexy lady. Finally he turns  
and goes back inside the house.

45 JOANNA -

coming down the stairs, frayed and weary.  
She moves into the kitchen, and finds

46 WALTER -

in the act of putting the casserole in the  
oven.

JOANNA

Walter, they're almost  
through - you want to tip  
them or something . . . ?  
What's that?

46 continued.

WALTER

Now you've ruined my surprise.  
Just something I threw  
together . . .

He lifts the lid off the casserole. It  
looks delicious. Joanna sniffs.

WALTER

Our next door neighbor,  
Carol van something, brought  
it over. She looks as good  
as she cooks.

JOANNA

Have we seen the husband yet?  
How much are you going to  
tip those guys?

WALTER

How about ten per cent of  
what they broke?

He goes.

47 LATER STILL - EXTERIOR OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT -  
we see Joanna at one of the upstairs windows  
tacking a sheet across it. Walter comes out, finds  
Fred in station wagon. He walks across  
his lawn to the boundary between the two houses.  
Stands there. Pride of ownership, lord of  
the manor feeling.

48 CLOSER -

with him we gradually become conscious of  
another man walking towards us. This is  
Ted van Sant. He is about the same age  
as Walter. He comes right up to Walter  
- there should be nothing too mysterious  
about this, but at the same time it is  
slightly odd for the two men do not greet  
each other. Hold this for a few seconds.

WALTER (quietly)

She's as good a cook as  
you said she was, Ted.

Maybe Ted gives the slightest of self-  
satisfied nods. Hold for a few more seconds  
before the cut.

49 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT -  
the furniture has been placed in some sort of  
order, but there are still packing crates  
around. A fire is burning in the fireplace.  
Walter is standing in front of it, warming  
his arse, looking very much the master of  
the house. He has a drink in his hand.  
Joanna comes in.

JOANNA

They want you to say goodnight  
to them again.

WALTER

That makes three times.

JOANNA

Well, it's all strange.  
Did you pour me one?

WALTER

There.

Joanna picks up her drink.

JOANNA

I don't know . . . The  
whole place . . .

WALTER

What?

JOANNA

Seems bigger . . .

She stares out of the window into the  
blackness.

JOANNA

In New York you always know  
somebody's looking at you . . .  
What d'you think the people  
are like here?

WALTER

Friendly. That was a good  
casserole she cooked.

He seems to be wary of her.

49 continued.

JOANNA (sips her drink)  
Walter . . . Why did we  
move?

WALTER (reasonably)  
Because we both agreed it  
was best . . . Best for the  
kids, for you because you  
had more space, make yourself  
a darkroom . . . Because it  
was time to move and I got  
a terrific deal on this  
house . . . and because it's  
safer.

Joanna nods.

WALTER  
And because I can warm my  
ass by a real fire . . .

JOANNA  
They're all terrific reasons.  
Go and say goodnight to the  
kids. Is Fred okay?

WALTER  
He's like you. He misses  
familiar places . . .

He downs the rest of his drink, kisses  
her lightly.

WALTER  
You ever made it in front of  
a log fire?

JOANNA  
Not with you.

WALTER  
It comes with the house. Part of  
the deal.

He exits upstairs. Joanna sits by the fire,  
stares into it.

50 EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY -  
a School Bus waiting outside as Joanna ushers  
Kim and Amy towards it. They are not too  
happy with the occasion.

12  
13  
14

50 continued.

JOANNA

. . . Now, that's just  
silly. Course you're  
going to enjoy it . . .  
Lovely new school, lots  
of exciting things to do . . .

She kisses them and they cling to her.  
She helps them up into the bus.

51 GO WITH THEM -  
as they stand inside the bus.

52 STARING AT THEM -  
are maybe fifteen strange young faces.  
Without making too much of it we should  
be aware that the Stepford children are  
better groomed than Amy and Kim - their  
hair is neater and their clothes, without  
being uniform, have a sameness to them.

53 AMY AND KIM -  
would like to escape, but the driver closes  
the doors and the bus starts to move off.  
They turn for one last despairing goodbye  
to

54 JOANNA -  
who is scared for them, but trying not to  
show it. She waves and stands watching until  
the bus is out of sight. Then turns and  
opens the mail box. She takes out a copy  
of the local Stepford newspaper and carries  
this back into the house.

55 INT. THE KITCHEN - DAY -  
remains of the breakfast still in evidence.  
Nothing tidied away yet. Joanna comes in.  
She makes herself a cup of instant coffee.  
No saucer to the cup. Sits down, opens  
the newspaper and glances at it. It  
depresses her. Everything depresses her  
at this point. She sits there and cries  
silently.

56 EXT. THE GARDEN - DAY -  
Fred secured to a tree by a length of rope  
which allows him a decent run. He takes  
a tug at it.

WOMAN  
BUS DRIVER

57 A VOLKSWAGON -  
is parked in front of the house. Joanna  
is talking to an elderly woman with a  
Southern accent who, it becomes clear, is  
the Welcome Wagon Lady. She has already  
given Joanna a considerable amount of debris.

WELCOME WAGON LADY  
Now lemme just see . . .  
what else have I got for  
you? Yes, here . . .  
Shoe repair discount,  
good for new heels the  
entire month of April . . .

She hands Joanna a slip.

JOANNA  
Thanks, really - this is  
already more than enough . . .

WELCOME WAGON LADY  
(nothing stops her)  
Good for twenty two items  
at the market . . .  
(another slip)  
Compliments of Cornell's  
Pharmacy . . .  
(this time a small bottle)  
. . . that's real French  
perfume and just lovely . . .  
(gets out a notebook)  
Now, I also do the 'Notes  
on Newcomers' column for  
the Weekly Chronicle . . .  
Did you get the copy I  
left in the mail box?

JOANNA  
Oh. Yes, thanks you.

WELCOME WAGON LADY  
Well, then you know my style.  
It's mainly for ladies, so  
you just go right ahead  
and tell me about yourself.

Joanna hadn't expected this and  
is momentarily taken aback.

WELCOME WAGON LADY  
Now don't go all shy.

DOLAN HOUSE

57 continued.

JOANNA

Well, there's nothing much to tell . . .

WELCOME WAGON LADY

What does your husband do?

JOANNA

He's a lawyer . . .

WELCOME WAGON LADY (jotting)

A lawyer!

JOANNA

He specialises in estate and tax mostly . . . And me, well, I'm just a sort of hopeful, would-be, semi-professional photographer . . .

WELCOME WAGON LADY

Now that's certainly of interest, yes.

JOANNA

It's also about it, too. For awhile I was into the women's thing . . .

WELCOME WAGON LADY

What was that?

JOANNA

Woman's Lib.

WELCOME WAGON LADY

Oh, yes.

JOANNA

But I got bored listening to all those hostile ladies - don't bother mentioning it even. . . I'm still for it, but silently.

WELCOME WAGON LADY

What d'you think you'll miss most about New York?

JOANNA

Noise.

58 EXT. CAROL VAN SANT'S GARDEN - DAY -  
we see Carol doing something vaguely Marie  
Antoinette. By that we mean that she is  
busy clipping something, but doesn't seem  
to be dressed correctly for the occasion.  
She looks too groomed, too tidy.

59. INT. JOANNA - IN THE MASTER BEDROOM -  
which she is attempting to put straight.  
She crosses the window and her attention is  
caught by Carol outside. She remembers  
something and exits the room. Sound of  
a car drawing up.

60 GO TO THE VAN SANT'S HOUSE -  
where Ted is just getting out of his Lincoln.  
He walks into the house.

61 PICK UP JOANNA -  
leaving the kitchen with the casserole dish.  
It has been washed. We follow her for  
a few paces and then she stops.

62 WHAT SHE SEES -  
is Ted come out of the rear of his house  
and go up to his wife who has her back to  
him. He puts both his hands on her breasts.

63 BACK TO JOANNA -  
standing there, a little uncertain as to what  
to do.

64 RESUME HER EYELINE -  
Carol looks over her shoulder - it is a small  
movement, not a complete turn of the head.  
She puts down the garden clippers and walks  
back into the house. Ted remains there,  
apparently in no hurry. He does not look in  
Joanna's direction, but picks up a child's  
toy and then saunters back into the house.

65 JOANNA AGAIN -  
it is obviously not the right moment to return  
a casserole dish. She grimaces and goes back  
into the kitchen.

66 INT. JOANNA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT -  
Walter helping with the dishes.

JOANNA

• • I mean, I'm assuming  
it was Mr. van Sant.

66 continued.

WALTER  
What time was it?

JOANNA  
Mid-morning. Way before noon.

WALTER  
And he put both hands on her  
boobs? How exactly? Like  
this or like this?

He suits his actions to his words.

JOANNA (warningly)  
Walter . . . Darling . . .

WALTER  
I just want to get the facts  
right. My legal mind.

JOANNA  
Your sexy mind. Stepford  
has really done things for  
you.

WALTER  
I intend to christen every  
room in the house.

JOANNA  
Just finish the dishes first.  
Tell me about your day.

WALTER  
Well, I didn't witness any  
soft core porno like you,  
so it's dull by comparison,  
but I met some of the other  
Stepford commuters . . .

JOANNA  
You want coffee?

WALTER  
Sanka.

JOANNA  
Oh. I haven't been shopping  
yet.

66 continued.

WALTER

Okay. Regular. They seem like a bright enough bunch.

His conversation is casual.

WALTER

They've got a lot going here. . . They were telling me about the Mens' Association . . apparently it's the place to join . . I mean, it's quite an honor to be asked to join.

JOANNA

Why is it an honor . .

WALTER

Why is it an honor? Well, 'cause every important guy in Stepford's a member . . commuters and townies . . I mean, but everybody . . Tv executives, shrinks, scientists, police chief, fire chief, the head of the hospital, the guy who runs the phone company . .

JOANNA

So did they ask you?

WALTER

Did they ask me?

JOANNA

Yes. Walter, am I going crazy? You keep repeating the questions. Did they ask you?

WALTER

In a way, yes.

JOANNA

In a way you could refuse, or a way you had to accept?

66 continued.

WALTER

They said I had a dead shot at getting in, which I felt pretty good about . . . I gotta admit they've got one rule I don't much care for, but I gather that's going to be changed within six months or something . . .

JOANNA

What rule?

WALTER

It's strictly men only.

Joanna stops whatever she is doing and looks at him.

JOANNA

I give up on you.

WALTER

What's that mean?

JOANNA

Why don't you ever - once - come out and tell me the truth. . . You pretend that we decide things together, but it's always you, what you want. You asked me if I wanted to move out here and I found you'd already been looking for a house . . You asked me if I liked this place and I found you'd already made the down payment . . Now you're asking me about the shitty Mens' Association and it's quite obvious you've already joined . . So why bother to ask me at all?

She starts to exit.

JOANNA

I'm going to put the children to bed.

Walter stares after her. He doesn't seem that disturbed by her outburst.

67 EXT. STEPFORD VILLAGE - DAY -  
a Saturday morning. It's picture postcard time.

68 EXT. SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY -  
the parking lot is jam-crammed full of  
station wagons. All shiny.

69 INT. THE SUPERMARKET - DAY -  
which should be as near perfect as we can make it,  
with everything stacked in abundance. Apart  
from the staff there seems to be very few  
men about, but those ladies we see are no  
hardship to behold. We shall meet some of  
them again later on.

70 JOANNA, WALTER AND THE CHILDREN -  
are at the check-out with two cartful loads.  
Walter is writing out a check and a teenage  
male assistant starts to wheel their purchases  
towards the exit for them.

71 EXT. THE PARKING LOT AGAIN -  
where another young teenage clerk, having  
loaded the rear, is closing the tailgate on  
another station wagon.

CLERK  
All set, Mrs Sunderson.  
Just back right out.

72 PICK UP JOANNA AND WALTER -  
making for their own station wagon some  
distance away from Mrs Sunderson.

73 GO TO MRS SUNDERSEN AGAIN -  
as she backs out of her space.

74 GO TO ANOTHER STATION WAGON -  
driven by Carol van Sant, as it moves out.

75 THE YOUNG CLERK -  
suddenly turns. Shocked.

CLERK  
Hey . . Hold it! Hold it!

But he is too late and has to jump  
clear as the two wagons collide.

76 CAROL VAN SANT -  
is thrown forward by the collision. Her  
head smacks into the steering wheel and  
we see blood.

77 MRS SUNDERSEN -  
unharmed, gets out quickly and runs to  
Carol.

KIT

Omigod, Carol, I didn't  
see you, I thought it was  
clear, omigod, I'm sorry,  
I'm sorry . . .

CAROL

. . . it's nothing . . . really  
. . just the surprise of it  
. . . I'm fine.

CLERK

It wasn't my fault. I  
didn't mean nothing, it  
was one of those things,  
y'know?

He waves towards the market where

78 THE MARKET MANAGER -  
a man of considerable girth, is already on  
the phone and talking fast.

79 WALTER -  
and others coming forward to see what has  
happened.

80 AN AMBULANCE -  
in spanking condition, motor running, in  
the parking lot. A crowd gathered round the  
scene. The ambulance personnel are helping  
Carol to the vehicle. Kit Sunderson walks  
alongside her.

CAROL

This is really silly,  
I'm fine, it's not serious.

KIT

What can I do, Carol, tell me?

*Real  
Personnel*

80 continued.

CAROL

My groceries . . .

KIT

I'll drive them home for  
you.

CAROL

Could you call Larsen's Garage too?

KIT

Of course. . . . .

They are beside the ambulance by now  
and Carol is helped into it.

81 GO TO THE MARKET MANAGER -  
the centre of the crowd of onlookers  
which includes Walter, Joanna and  
the children.

81/2 <sup>so</sup> <sup>the</sup>  
81/2 <sup>new</sup> <sup>cont.</sup>

MARKET MANAGER

You think you'd get a-bulance  
service better than this  
anywhere? Two hours you'd  
wait in New York and I bet  
even in Scarsdale it'd take  
forty five minutes . . .  
Six minutes we took!

82 THE AMBULANCE -  
starts to drive off.

MARKET MANAGER

Any the rest of you want  
to have an accident, make  
sure you do it right here  
in Stepford . . . Six minutes,  
can you beat that?

He shakes his head in proud amazement.  
Walter and Joanna start to move back  
to their own car.

WALTER

I guess that's the friendliest  
accident I ever saw.

He opens the doors for Joanna and  
the kids. Joanna looks puzzled.

WALTER

What?

82 continued.

JOANNA

I know we're new here, but  
I thought Stepford Hospital  
was that way.

WALTER

No, you're wrong.

Then he stops and looks.

WALTER

No, you're not wrong.  
It is that way.

They look at each other for a second.  
Then he shrugs and gets into the car.

83 INT. MOVING STATION WAGON - DAY -  
as they drive home. Starting on the  
children.

KIM (whisper to Amy)  
That was real blood,  
did you see?

Amy nods, impressed. The thumb goes  
in.

84 APPROACH TO THE MENS' ASSOCIATION - DAY -  
as the station wagon comes up to it. The  
ambulance should pass them going in the  
other direction. We should have no idea  
where it has come from.

85 INSIDE THE STATION WAGON AGAIN -  
Joanna looking around.

JOANNA

What's that place?

WALTER

That's the . . . that's  
the Mens' Association.

KIM

What is it, Mummy?

JOANNA

It's a place for people like  
Daddy.

85 continued.

KIM  
Lawyers?

JOANNA  
Aging perverts.

KIM  
What are perverts?

JOANNA  
Ask Daddy. He's going there tonight.

But Walter refuses to be drawn in.

86 WIDER ANGLE -  
as the station wagon makes the turn, the  
same young policeman moves away from his  
parked patrol car and holds up the traffic.

87 A LARGE TRUCK -  
crosses the intersection and heads into the  
Mens' Association driveway. In the back  
are several large open crates holding giant  
jars of liquid. It drives on towards the  
building. We hold on it for a long time.  
Too long a time. If the ambulance going the  
wrong way - or was it? - didn't indicate  
strangeness to come, then this hold might  
do the trick.

88 INT. JOANNA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT -  
she is sitting on the floor unpacking a suitcase.  
There is a half-finished drink beside her.  
The suitcase contains a mess of photographs,  
most of them trimmed and mounted. They are  
'New York' type shots. Joanna sips at her  
drink as she goes through them. Sound of  
one of the children crying out upstairs.  
Joanna listens. The cry comes again and  
she exits the room quickly.

89 AMY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT -  
Amy sitting up in her bed, half crying. Joanna  
enters and sits beside her.

JOANNA  
What is it, darling?

AMY  
I can't sleep, it's all  
quiet.

JOANNA  
I know. I know.

Wes. Day  
Cancer?

89 continued.

She lies the child down and then gets on the bed herself.

JOANNA

Never mind, you'll . . .  
get used to it soon.  
Look at Teddy, he doesn't mind.  
He likes the quiet. He  
likes all the honey out  
there in the trees . . .

She strokes the child's head as she talks.

JOANNA

See, he really likes this  
better than Central Park,  
because he can go out by  
himself . . . and if he gets  
lost it doesn't matter . . .  
because he's really a  
Stepford bear and he knows  
his way around . . .

The child's eyes have closed by now.  
Joanna remains there, staring up at  
the ceiling. It is quiet.

90 INT. JOANNA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT -  
Joanna in bed, alone. She stirs, opens  
her eyes, then turns her head and finds  
that Walter isn't there. She looks at  
the clock-radio: it shows three in the  
morning. She sits up in bed, listens.  
She starts to get out of bed.

91 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT -  
Joanna comes down the stairs.

JOANNA (at the bottom)  
Walter?

She looks towards the living room.

WALTER (Off Screen)  
What is it?

Joanna moves towards the living room  
doorway.

92 REVERSE ANGLE -  
shooting past Walter to Joanna framed  
in the doorway.

JOANNA  
You all right?

WALTER  
Yes.

JOANNA  
It's awfully late.

She takes a step or two into the room.

JOANNA  
Everything go okay at  
the initiation?

WALTER  
It wasn't an initiation.  
It's not a college fraternity.  
They just showed me around  
and asked me did I want to  
join and I said yes I did.

JOANNA  
Good. . . Do they  
exclude drinking as well  
as women up there?

WALTER  
No.

JOANNA  
Walter, I was worried . .  
I wake up, it's the middle  
of the night . . You're  
sitting in the dark drinking  
. . why are you sitting  
there, why didn't you come  
to bed?

WALTER  
I'm coming to bed.

JOANNA  
Did anybody say something to  
upset you? Is it something  
I did?

WALTER  
I'm not upset. Why would I  
be upset? Everything's fine.

93 continued.

JOANNA (louder)

Well, it's not fine. I was worried! I love you, Walter, but we don't talk to each other any more. You don't tell me anything.

He finishes his drink and gets up.  
He goes to her.

WALTER

All right . . . It's just that I felt like such a failure tonight, but I've got over it.

JOANNA

Why did you feel that?

WALTER

Seeing all those paunchy forty year old guys . . . all of a sudden it hit me . . . you and me . . . I didn't meant to be here when I was twenty . . . Shit . . . But it came and went. It's gone. . . And I'm sorry I worried you . . . because I love you, too. And things are going to get better.

JOANNA

Promise?

WALTER

In writing.

He puts an arm round her and walks her up the stairs again.

94 FXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY -  
 shooting straight into the lens of the Nikon.  
 In foreground is some blossom or dogwood  
 bud out of focus. We hear the sound of  
 the shutter being fired.

95 JOANNA -  
 behind the camera, straightens up. She  
 refocuses, then her expression changes.

96 WHAT SHE SEES -  
 is a car pulling in. A woman gets out -  
 this is Bobby - and like Joanna she is  
 wearing faded, casual clothes, sloppy  
 in fact, but they cannot hide the fact  
 that she is very attractive. She carries  
 a newspaper and walks towards the house.

97 JOANNA -  
 steps out and the two women see each other.

BOBBY  
 Hi! Are you Joanna  
 Eberhart?

JOANNA  
 Yes.

BOBBY (waves paper)  
The Joanna Eberhart -  
 ex-Gothamite, avid  
 shutterbug who misses  
 the noise of the naked  
 city?

Joanna stares at her.

BOBBY  
 Well, I am Bobby Markow  
 - that's upward mobility  
 for Markowitz - and I  
 am also an 'ex-Gothamite'  
 who's been living here  
 in Ajax country for just  
 over a month now . . .  
And I'm going crazy!

Joanna starts to smile.

BOBBY  
 You see, Doctor, my problem  
 is that, given complete  
 freedom of choice, I don't  
want to squeeze the Goddam  
Charmin.

97 continued.

She flings the Stepford Chronicle high in the air and Joanna instinctively aims the Nikon and fires it.

98 INT. JOANNA'S KITCHEN - DAY - as the two girls come inside. A lot of work has been done and most of the horrors of moving have been put out of sight. Bobby stops in the doorway.

Redding  
↓ Ridge

BOBBY  
A messy kitchen . . . how beautiful. Course it doesn't compare to mine . . . you don't have any of those magnificent peanut butter handprints all over your cabinets yet . . . But then you're new . . . Stepford wasn't ruined in a day.

She fumbles in a pocket.

BOBBY  
Want a ring-ding? I smuggled it over the border . . .

She hands one across.

JOANNA  
What year is it? Oh, my God, bliss.

She starts to eat it.

BOBBY  
Two things I always carry - Tampax and ring-dings and I don't even want to think what that means!

She sits.

BOBBY  
Got any coffee or anything?

JOANNA  
Is instant okay?

BOBBY  
You mean there's something else?

Joanna puts the kettle on.

97 continued.

BOBBY

I tell you, I can't figure out  
this burg . . . it's like  
maids have been declared  
illegal and the wife with  
the neatest place gets Robert  
Redford for Christmas . . .  
and believe me if that's the  
prize, I'd enter, but nobody'll  
tell what the contest rules  
are.

She pitches the ring-ding wrapper  
towards the wastebasket and misses.

BOBBY

Not to mention that creepy  
Mens' Association.

JOANNA

Yours too?

BOBBY

Every night. Dave wouldn't  
miss.

(she pulls something from  
under her)  
One of your kids lose some  
silly putty?

JOANNA

I knew it was someplace.  
What do you think they do  
up there?

BOBBY

Watch dirty movies and  
reminisce about the good  
old days. . . like those  
good old days when Playboy  
used the air brush.

Joanna pours water on the instant  
coffee and reaches for the Coffeemate.  
Bobby watches approvingly.

BOBBY

Oh, I ~~law~~ it, I love it.  
You're my kind of coffee-  
maker . . .

The friendship is sealed.

98 AN IMAGE -

starts to form in a developing pan and as the liquid is squirled we begin to recognise Bobby's features -

99 AND WE REVEAL -

that Joanna is in her basement darkroom, which is not yet fully operational, but she has rigged up a bench and her enlarger and is able to function. She watches the print carefully - it is the shot she took the first time she met Bobby. Somewhere a phone rings in the house. She hesitates, but it goes on ringing.

JOANNA (under her breath)  
Oh, shoot!

She pulls the print out and dunks it in the fixing tray before dashing up the stairs.

100 COEA'S OFFICE IN THE MENS' ASSOCIATION - NIGHT -  
Walter on the phone. Beyond him is Dale Coba, a very well preserved forty year old who looks as though he should be running MGM.

WALTER (into phone)  
. . Hey, it's me and I'm here and I'm on the New Projects Committee . . New Projects . . and how would you feel about the guys meeting at our place . . Like now, tonight?

101 JOANNA -

at the other end of the line.

JOANNA (into phone)  
Well, okay . . Yeah, that's great, I'll actually get to see you and some living people. But give me a few minutes, huh? Delighted you called, Mr. Eberhart.

102 BACK TO WALTER -

as he hangs up.

WALTER  
She'd love it.

102 continued.

COBA

You're not altogether sure  
about Stepford yet, are you  
Walter?

WALTER

That's not true . . . I think  
I am . . . It's a big change,  
you've got to admit that.

COBA

A change for the better,  
Walter . . . Let me show  
you something before we  
leave . . . I'll show you  
on the way down to pick up  
the others. I think it  
might go a long way . . .  
well anyway, let me show  
you.

He leads the way out of the room.

103 INT. WALTER AND JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
a large and virtually unfurnished room which  
has yet to be started on. Walter is showing  
the group around - included are Ted van Sant,  
Claude Axhelm, Ed Wimpiris, Ike Mazzard (who  
carries a small sketch pad).

WALTER

See, what I intend to do  
is really fix this place  
up . . . make it into a  
den cum playroom, maybe  
put a pool table in . . .  
I figured I'd go to town  
and really spoil myself.

AXHELM

Be-be-be great for-for  
the kids . . .

WALTER

Who's talking about the kids?  
It's a playroom, they ain't  
going to be allowed in . . .

104 JOANNA -  
is in the kitchen fixing sufficient  
coffee. She suddenly becomes aware  
that she is not alone and turns to  
find

105 COBA -

leaning in the doorway, watching her, his arms folded, shoulder to the jam. Very cool in his jade turtleneck and slate-gray corduroy suit. He smiles.

COBA

I like to watch women  
doing little domestic  
chores.

JOANNA

You came to the right town.  
Who was it wanted tea?

COBA

Claude.

JOANNA

He's the one who . . .

COBA

Stutters.

JOANNA

I'm very bad on names. . . .  
Why do they call you Diz?

COBA

I used to work at Disneyland.

JOANNA

No, really?

COBA

That's really. Don't you believe  
me?

JOANNA

No.

COBA

Why not?

She hesitates a fraction.

JOANNA

You don't look like someone  
who enjoys making people happy.

He takes this without apparent offence.

105 continued.

COBA  
How little you know.

She has finished the coffee tray by now and he stands aside as she walks through.

106 INT. THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - starting on Claude, who is seated near to Joanna. Ted van Sant is on her other side.

CLAUDE  
I'm really int . . . int . . . into speech work . . . wuh . . . wuh . . . words. Perhaps we . . . muh . might t-talk about it sometime?

JOANNA (she has no idea what he's talking about)  
Oh, absolutely, certainly . . .  
(turns to Ted)  
I hope your wife has got over the accident . . . It was your wife, wasn't it?

TED  
Oh, sure. It was just nothing, looked worse than it was.

JOANNA  
I must call on her. Should have done it before.

TED  
She'd love it.

107 ACROSS THE ROOM -  
Coba leans in.

COBA  
Shall we make a start?

WALTER  
Is it okay if Joanna sits in?

COBA  
Definitely, I'm sure she's got a lot to contribute.

107 continued.

ED

Well, we all know what  
we're here for, so who's  
going to be the first genius?

CLAUDE

How-how 'bout the Kuh . . .  
Kuh . . . Christmas toys  
for the underpuh . . . poor  
kids?

ED

For chrissakes, Claude, it's  
only May.

CLAUDE

I g-guess it's a little  
early t-to start thinking  
of C-Christmas . . .

108 WE SHOULD BE AWARE -

that Ike Mazzard has his sketch pad on his  
knee from the beginning and as the conversation  
starts he reaches for a very professional  
ink pen in his pocket. He works with a  
practised eye - a man who has been drawing  
for a living all his life. Camera moves  
in him as he opens the pad and makes the  
first assured strokes.

ED

And I'm frankly more interested  
in overprivileged kids - like  
my son hated camp so naturally.  
Charmaine won't hear of him  
going back . . . What's he gonna  
do all summer? Besides drive  
me batty?

109 CAMERA NOW MOVING IN ON JOANNA -

as the dialogue fades into the background  
and although she is making an attempt to  
follow the arguments, she gradually becomes  
aware of what Mazzard is doing. We will  
record chunks of dialogue which the actors  
can ab lib on the set while we accomplish  
two things. We want to convey the passing  
of time - the sterility of the meeting -  
and the juxtaposition of the photographic  
image of Joanna and the sketched image of  
Joanna. Optically, the two will overlap  
on occasions and obviously we should subtly  
convey that Mazzard is sketching details

as well as the whole face. Let him get up to put out a cigarette at one point and then sit down in another place so that he can get another angle on her.

110 CUTS ALSO OF WALTER AND COBA - Walter, the newcomer and host, but not unaware of what Mazzard is doing. Coba, urbane, relaxed, not saying much.

111 COMING OUT OF IT - as Joanna gets up to replenish the coffee pot, going out of the room and having to pass Mazzard, so that she can glance down and see what he is up to. She tries to meet Walter's eye, but he avoids the look.

112 ED WIMPIRIS - squashing yet another idea from the unfortunate Claude.

113 JOANNA RETURNS FROM THE KITCHEN - with fresh supplies of coffee. Hands Mazzard a cup and he hands her one of the sketches, and it is signed. She looks at it and now we are back to actual sound.

JOANNA  
Well, thank you . . .

She looks more closely.

JOANNA  
You're not the Ike Mazzard, are you, omigod . . . Walter, tell him, I'm just awful on names . . . you'll have to forgive me . . . omigod, I used to gawk at those gorgeous girls you drew in Esquire . . . You blighted my adolescence, you know that? All those dream girls of yours.

WALTER  
I thought I blighted your adolescence.

JOANNA  
I can't get over it. Is this for me?

MAZZARD  
Keep it.

— 113 continued.

JOANNA

Keep it? I'm going to  
insure it. Thank you so much.

MAZZARD

My pleasure.

Joanna passes it to Walter.

JOANNA

You see what you missed?

Walter stares at it. Is he merely flattered  
at a glamorized representation of his wife,  
or is there something else? We go in very  
close on the sketch.

114 EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT -  
as the men are departing. Walter saying goodbye.  
Coba at his car, which is an import and  
very stylish. Mazzard comes to him and  
hands him the sketch pad.

COBA

You never cease to amaze  
me, Ike.

MAZZARD

Yes. I was pretty good  
there tonight, I thought.

Coba gets into his car.

115 INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT -  
Joanne preparing for bed. The Mazzard sketch  
is propped on her dressing table. Walter  
comes in.

JOANNA

You've been a long time.

WALTER

Just clearing up. I can't  
bear coming down in the morning  
to a mess of filthy ashtrays.  
What did you think? Quite  
a bunch of guys, huh?

JOANNA (turns)  
You serious?

115 continued.

She is good natured during the next exchange. No bitching. Just a wife giving her opinion to her husband.

JOANNA

You have to be kidding.  
You wouldn't have given those bores house room back in Manhattan . . . I mean, okay, I was pleased to get this and he was quite sweet, but the rest!

WALTER

I don't happen to agree.

JOANNA

Walter, you must agree.  
My God, they're worse than your senior partners. New Projects Committee!- they should start by working on themselves

WALTER

That's just your opinion.

JOANNA

Well, course it's my opinion.  
Who else sat there? Darling, where's your sense of humour?  
They were dummies. I mean, take El Presidente, that graduate from Disneyland . . .

WALTER

He just happens to be a PHD from Berkely. He runs a billion dollar corporation.

JOANNA

What do they make - sleeping pills?

She picks up the sketch.

JOANNA

Darling, look, this isn't me, and what you're saying isn't you. You're putting me on.

115 continued.

Walter

No. We're in Stepford now, not in New York and these are the people we have to live with and they suit me fine.

Joanna stares at him.

116 EXT. A BACK YARD AREA - EVENING - which of course is a cameraman's nightmare, but we want the impression of sun slanting through the trees on a perfect setting. Tables laid out, elegant couples sipping drinks, children playing in the distance. New arrivals coming all the time.

117 FIND BOBBY - on her own. Without reaching for it we should be aware that she is dressed as the other women. She leads us to

118 JOANNA - who is just shooing her two children towards the play area. Like Bobby there is something a little out of place in her dress.

BOBBY

I don't believe all this. D'you think we should go home and change? Like put on fancy dress?

She turns and smiles as somebody passes.

BOBBY

Hullo, how are you, lovely party.

(then to Joanna again)  
Did you get a look at the food?

They walk towards one of the food tables, which is really something, full of home baked breads and cakes and home made preserves and salads and whole roasted hams and all in all you could go crazy looking.

BOBBY

How about photographing it for a Save The Children poster?

119 JOANNA -  
stares.

JOANNA

Like Walter says, this is  
all so dazzling, why don't  
I like it? I mean, I like  
it, it's perfect, how could  
you not like it, I just don't  
like it, am I making any sense?

Carol van Sant comes up to them. She  
has a small plaster on her forehead  
- all that remains of the accident.

CAROL

Hi, you two, you want to  
meet some people?

BOBBY

Why not? We're not proud.

They are led away.

120 OVER BY THE BAR-B-Q -  
Ted van Sant in charge of operations, assisted  
by Claude who wears a ludicrous apron, and  
Mr.Cornell who is the sauce chef. Hamburger  
after hamburger is laid down in rows. Big and  
fat and juicy.

TED

Fire's as ready as it's  
gonna get . . .

Walter drifts into scene, glass in hand.

WALTER

Need help?

TED

I think we've got it all  
tucked away, but thanks for  
the offer, Walter.

121 FIND JOANNA AND BOBBY AGAIN -  
with Carol at one of the food tables. Carol,  
a drink in one hand, is dabbing some home made  
preserves onto a piece of home made cake.  
Tastes it. Delicious.

CAROL

I'll just die if I don't  
get this recipe.

121 continued.

She turns to Joanna and Bobby.

CAROL

I'll just die if I don't  
get this recipe.

Kit Sundersen walks into shot.

CAROL

I'll just die if I don't  
get this recipe.

She drifts across the scene, in the  
direction of the bar-b-q.

122 TED -

is working hard on the hamburger production  
line. Quite a group standing around.

CAROL

I'll just die if I  
don't get this recipe.

123 CLAUDE -  
glances at Ted.

TED (rips off his apron)  
Lemme take you up on that  
help offer, okay, Walter?

Walter catches the apron he tosses.  
Ted moves to Carol, grabs the glass from  
her hand and takes her roughly by the arm.

TED (soft, but the words carry)  
How many of these you had?  
Don't you know you can't  
handle this stuff, don't you  
remember what this stuff does  
to you?

He propels her past Joanna and Bobby.

CAROL

I'll just die if I don't  
get this recipe.

TED

You had to do this in public,  
Jesus, where's your sense,  
Get in the car . . .

123 continued.

He exits with her.

WALTER (calling out)  
Hey, who's hungry? Joanna?  
Bobby?

Camera moves in on Joanna and Bobby who are not laughing, not having a gay old time, they are just staring after Carol and their image is taken over by

124 A CHILD ON A SWING - DAY -  
soaring high amongst trees. The child is one of Bobby's sons, and the swing - an F.A.O.Schwartz-type three swing set - is bolted into the ground at the rear of Bobby's house. As the shot opens out we reveal that the second son is standing astride the remaining two swings and that watching this daring feat from a distance are Amy and Kim.

BOBBY (Off Screen)  
All right, Markow's -  
off!

125 INT. BOBBY'S KITCHEN - DAY -  
which is not overly neat. Bobby at the kitchen window.

BOBBY  
Now!

We hear a general 'Aww' from the boys.

BOBBY  
Okay, Kim, take your turn.  
Amy, you too.

She comes away from the window to where Joanna is sitting over a cup of coffee.

BOBBY  
Some kids don't like sharing things - thank God mine aren't that kind.

JOANNA  
Probably the way you bring them up.

125 continued.

BOBBY (nodding)  
Firmness and understanding,  
that's my secret.

The doorbell rings and she starts to  
exit.

BOBBY  
Coupled, of course, with  
wisdom.

126 CLOSE SHOT - CAROL -  
standing in the front door of Bobby's house.

CAROL  
It was a problem I had, you  
see . . . I couldn't handle  
it, it was out of control . . .  
I guess that's one of the  
reasons Ted moved us to  
Stepford, the drinking was  
getting so bad and he blamed  
the city and all the pressures . . .

127 WE REVEAL -  
Bobby and Joanna, standing uncomfortably.  
It is an uncomfortable scene.

CAROL  
And I was just so nervous  
I guess . . . I don't go  
out a lot any more and  
I knew I shouldn't have  
touched the stuff but I did  
and I'm sorry I ruined it  
all and I apologise.

JOANNA  
You don't have to apologise,  
Carol.

BOBBY  
Not to us.

CAROL  
Well, we just felt it was  
important that you two understand,  
since you're both the newest in Stepford.  
and we didn't want you getting  
the wrong opinion..

JOANNA  
Who's 'we', Carol?

127 continued.

CAROL

Oh, Ted, naturally, and Ike  
was there and he's so old and  
smart that once I'd sobered  
up some we asked him and  
Claude's a good friend and  
he was there at the party  
too, so . . .

She drifts off.

JOANNA

You mean the men made you come  
and apologise like this?

CAROL

No, I wanted to, really . . .  
all they did was sort of  
confirm my feelings, that's  
all . . . anyway . .

She tries for a smile.

BOBBY

You want to come in?

CAROL

No, I gotta get back now . . .  
I've seen Charmaine . . and  
I gotta get back now . .  
Thanks for listening.

She turns and walks away to her car.

128 JOANNA AND BOBBY -  
just stand there, amazed. They turn back  
into the house.

BOBBY

Incredible.

JOANNA

Absolutely unbelievable.

BOBBY

If I was forced to apologise  
every time I got smashed,  
I'd spend my whole life wandering  
around saying, 'I'm sorry, I'm sorry.'

128 continued.

JOANNA

That is a lady who could use some help.

BOBBY

You know, if Dave ever tried to make me do that, I'd join the Teamsters.

JOANNA

Listen, that's not a bad idea. A Stepford Local . . . I guess I told you that I messed with Women's Lib a little back in New York . . .

BOBBY

Didn't we all?

JOANNA

. . . and I'm not really contemplating any Maidenform bonfires, but they could certainly use something around here.

They look at each other.

JOANNA

You game?

BOBBY

I'm game.

129 INT. MARIE'S AXHELM'S LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY - which is something out of House and Garden, and good enough to have an affair in. Martex towels in matching colours, with face cloths and complimentary sheets, stacked on white shelves as neatly as the Nonesuch Dickens. The very latest washing machine and drier, and ironing board, and the whole bit. Marie is thirty one, blonde and curvy. She irons all the time Joanna and Bobby are talking to her.

*Struck  
House*

MARIE

Gee, it sounds like fun, but I've got three kids and the oldest is six, and that doesn't leave me with a whole lot of extra time.

129 continued.

JOANNA

We really understand, Marie,  
and we're not after you to change  
your life style, but doesn't it  
ever bother you that the most  
important organization in  
Stepford is sexually archaic?

MARIE

Ar-kay-ic?

BOBBY

Old fashioned, out of date.

MARIE

Does it ever bother me . . . ?

(stops ironing: thinks)

Nope.

She goes back to her labours.

130 INT. KIT SUNDERSEN'S MASTER BEDROOM - DAY -  
Even in her housedress she looks lush and  
terrific.

KIT

I've never been much of a  
joiner I'm afraid.

BOBBY

This isn't any life long  
commitment we're after.

JOANNA

. . . We just want to see if  
there's any interest for some  
kind of activities in Stepford,  
that's all.

KIT (concentrating on bed-making)  
Well, there isn't any interest  
here, Joanna . . . I just love  
hospital corners, don't you?

131 EXT. SHOPPING AREA - A ~~BAKERY~~ - DAY -  
Joanna and Bobby waiting in line talking  
to another attractive lady, Mary Ann Starvos.

MARY ANN

Sorry, I just can't waste my  
spare moments on somethin'  
like that.

131 continued.

JOANNA (a little desperate)  
But you do go out sometimes,  
don't you?

MARY ANN  
Go out? Course I go out.  
I'm out now, aren't I?

132 EXT. MR.CORNELL'S HOUSE - DAY -  
Joanna's car parked. She and Bobby  
walking to the front door.

JOANNA  
This is who?

BOBBY  
Cornell. Husband owns the  
pharmacy, she works there  
sometimes. What I'd give  
for her chest.

They arrive at the front door. It is  
slightly ajar and Bobby pushes it.

JOANNA  
There's this new thing they've  
invented. It's called knocking.

BOBBY  
Doesn't interest me. I'm  
a natural born barger.

133 CUT TO INTERIOR OF THE HALLWAY -  
as Bobby pokes a head in. She is just about  
to say 'Hey, Hello' when there is a crash  
off screen as a piece of furniture goes over.  
Bobby's mouth freezes.

MRS CORNELL  
Don't stop touching me,  
damn you.

MR. CORNELL  
But, honey, I've got to get  
back to the store -

MRS CORNELL  
- What's so important?

Bobby and Joanna both frozen.

133 continued.

MR. CORNELL

There might be a beautiful lady customer waiting for me.

MRS CORNELL

You've got a beautiful lady customer right here.

MR. CORNELL

Yeah? Says who?

MRS CORNELL

Says . . . says . . . Oh, Frank, Oh, Frank . . . God, I just love that . . . oh, yes . . . Oh . . . yes, yes . . . nobody ever touched me like you touch me . . . There . . . you're the best, Frank . . . Oh, God, are you the best . . . There . . . you're the king, Frank, the champion, Frank . . . the . . . the . . . master . . .

And by now Bobbie and Joanna have withdrawn like Tom and Jerry on tip toe.

134 EXT. THE CORNELL'S HOUSE - DAY - as they gain the car, closing the doors quietly. As Joanna turns the ignition:

BOBBY

I didn't say anything.

135 EXT. AN IMPRESSIVE MODERN HOUSE - DAY - as Bobby's car pulls in. She and Bobby both wear tennis clothes.

JOANNA

Yes?

Bobby consults a piece of paper.

BOBBY

Must be. There's the court.

JOANNA

You sure now? We don't want to strike out again.

135 continued.

BOBBY (imitation)  
Oh, God, Frank, I'm sure..

JOANNA  
Wasn't that awful. All  
your fault.

BOBBY  
But this time I've got an  
invitation. Listen, her  
name's Charmaine Wimpiris  
and we were buying our kids  
shoes and I got to talking  
and she said 'come on over,  
it sounds interesting,' and  
the way we've been bombing  
out I consider that a  
triumph.

They get out and walk towards the house.

136 CLOSE SHOT - CHARMAINE -  
creaming a serve. If you squint just a little  
she looks like Raquel Welch. She plays  
tennis like an angry man.

137 JUMP CUT TO -  
Charmaine slamming an overhead.

138 JUMP CUT TO -  
Charmaine lacing a forehand down the line.

139 AND JOANNA -  
facing her tries to reach it, but it's too  
hard and too well placed.

140 BOBBY  
sitting cross-legged on the best type of  
French garden chair by the clay court. She  
watches, glad to be out of it, as the game  
finishes and Charmaine and Joanna move off  
the court and towards her.

CHARMAINE  
No, you're good, I can tell  
that, it's just you're out  
of practice . .  
(to Bobby)  
Didn't you think she was  
terrific?

*Tom Tennis Hockey Court*

140 continued.

BT

BOBBY  
I thought you were terrific.

CHARMAINE  
Oh, well . . . listen, play here  
as often as you want, please,  
I mean that . . . Ginny Fisher  
used to play but she finked  
out on me . . . the only  
competition I've got left are  
a couple of teen-age neighbor  
boys with permanent erections.

BOBBY  
Send them to my place . . .

141 ON THE TERRACE - DAY -  
Charmaine, Joanna and Bobby having lunch  
under a large umbrella. It's like a blueprint  
of the good life. Nettie, a picture-book maid  
is serving coffee, iced tea.

CHARMAINE (as maid goes)  
Isn't Nettie marvellous?  
A German Virgo - their thing  
is to serve.

BOBBY  
So that's why we won the war.

CHARMAINE  
Listen, I didn't get you out  
here on false pretenses,  
I am interested but I'm  
no fanatic. We moved here  
two months ago, and Ed joined  
the Mens' Association and  
I know it's unfair and sexist,  
but frankly I'm not upset  
because anything that gets him  
out of the house nights is  
fine with me.

BOBBY  
If we could set a consciousness  
raising group going, you'd come?

CHARMAINE  
Bitching session, you mean? Like  
a shot. You wouldn't believe  
what Ed tries putting me through  
- he had a rubber suit made for  
me in England - how about that,  
sports fans?

142 EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY -  
with Bobby dropping Joanna off.

BOBBY

Okay, she may not be ideal material, but at least she's not in love with her fabric softener. Hey, how about that business with the rubber suit? And I thought Dave had some weirdo ideas.

JOANNA

Dave?

BOBBY

You don't get true confessions out of me, sister - I'm a Leo and our thing is changing the subject.

She drives off. Joanna walks towards the house.

WALTER (off Screen)

Hold it.

Joanna turns.

143 WALTER -

a short distance away. He has the very latest type Polaroid Camera. He presses the trigger and the print comes out like a tongue.

144 JOANNA -  
surprised.

JOANNA

When'd you get that?

WALTER

I treated you to it.

JOANNA

Me?

WALTER

Well, you don't get to use it, because I know how you feel about these tourist jobs. . . But you're taking photographs all the time and I never get any of you. Course it's gonna cost me a fortune.

145 HE TAKES ANOTHER PICTURE -  
and looks happy.

WALTER

I may hire myself out for  
weddings. . . Hey,  
look at this. Not bad, eh?

He hands it to Joanna.

JOANNA

I just don't understand what makes  
these things work, but they're so  
good it depresses me.

WALTER

Come and see the ones I  
took of the kids . . .  
. . I'll end up a three  
pack a day man for sure.

They link arms and go into the house.

WALTER

By the way, before I forget,  
would you ring Claude  
Axhelm . . he's into something  
and wants your help.

JOANNA

My help? What could that be?

The rest of the conversation is lost to us.

146 INT. JOANNA'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT -  
Claude taking a transistor cassette recorder  
from his attache case and putting it on  
the coffee table. Joanna and the two children  
watching.

CLAUDE

I really ap-appreciate this,  
Joanna . . Now here's  
the duh-drill . . I'm an  
accent freak, I'm not sure  
why, probably on account of,  
I don't know if you've noticed  
it or not, but I stammer.

JOANNA

When you were young, you mean?

146 continued.

CLAUDE

No-no . . still do, it's just  
I work extra hard to control it.

The children are fascinated.

CLAUDE (opens folder)

Now here. I want you to  
write down every place you've ever  
lived . . from when you were  
born 'til now . . And t-t-this  
is just standard vocabulary.

Joanna takes the folder from him and  
looks through it.

CLAUDE

See, it's just straight through  
the al-alphabet . . 'A' 'Aback'  
Abandon, like that. This here's  
easy to operate, just push the  
switch and talk into it.

JOANNA

But what's it for, Claude?

CLAUDE

J-J-Just a lifelong h-h-hobby.

The children attempt to take the  
folder from Joanna.

JOANNA

Don't touch.

CLAUDE

See, once I get enough samples,  
I aim to feed into a computer  
and programme it, and what I'll  
get back is an in-in-instant  
geographical rundown on a  
person. I r-really think it'll  
be more important than fingerprints  
in p-police cases . .

JOANNA (unconvinced)

Yes, well that's very interesting  
but it's too much work, Claude,  
I'm sorry . . We Stepford wives  
are busy, busy, busy, you know.  
Like your wife . .

146 continued.

KIM

He going to take your fingerprints?

JOANNA

No. Just like your wife . . .  
Bobby and I tried getting her  
to come to one of our little  
projects, but she had too  
much ironing. Bet you could  
convince her though.

Claude looks dubious.

JOANNA

Kit Sundersen, too . . . If  
they could find the time for  
me . . . I could find it for you.

CLAUDE

Isn't this kinda blackmail,  
Joanna.

JOANNA (nods and smiles)  
It's what made this country  
great, Claude.

147 INT. PLAYROOM - BOBBY'S HOUSE - DAY -  
the consciousness raising session: Those  
present, Joanna, Bobby, Charmaine, Carol,  
Marie and Kit.

JOANNA

Well, now, there are just  
a few rules . . . No one can  
be leader, and we all have to  
talk. Usually we start out  
bitching but maybe if we're  
lucky we can get into something  
more constructive. . . . Anybody  
have any questions?

Nobody does.

JOANNA

Well, good.

(pause)

Then we might as well get going . . .  
Fine . . . terrific . . . who  
wants to start?

Nobody much wants to.

147. continued

JOANNA

Talk about sex, money, our  
marriages, anything at all.

(silence)

Well . . . how 'bout if I start?

Everybody nods.

JOANNA

Right . . yes . . well . .  
I think there are times when  
Walter cares more about the  
law than he does about me, and  
that can hurt.

BOBBY

Big deal . . I know Dave  
is hotter for the stock market  
than he is for me . .

CHARMAINE (surprisingly quiet)  
I don't think Ed ever loved me.  
He married me because I looked  
right. It made a good impression  
on other TV executives for his  
wife to look like I look.  
God knows he's given me things,  
I'm not complaining on that  
score. But he never loved me.

Slight pause.

KIT

I didn't bake anything yesterday.

Bobby stares stupefied.

KIT

It took so long getting the  
upstairs to shine, I never got  
time to bake.

JOANNA

But you don't have to bake, Kit -  
there's no law.

CHARMAINE

Hell, Ed's lucky if I remember  
to keep him in Tip-Top.

MARIE (leans to Kit)  
Easy-on Spray Stars.

147 continued.

KIT  
Hmmm?

MARIE  
It must save me half an hour a day at least - you'll never run short of time again, I guarantee it.

CAROL  
I've just been tempted so many times to try Easy-on . . .

Things are going too fast for Joanna.

JOANNA  
Listen, I'm not trying to be leader or anything, but we're not supposed to delve quite so specifically into housework . . .

KIT (paying no attention)  
. . . Easy-on's really that good?

MARIE  
Is it that good? Well, if time is your enemy, make friends with Easy-on, that's all I can tell you . . .  
(her enthusiasm builds)  
It's so good that if ever I got famous and the Easy-on people asked me would I do a commercial not only would I do it, I'd do it for free, that's how good it is.

Joanna and Bobby and indeed Charmaine can only gape.

148 EXT. FRONT LAWN BOBBY'S HOUSE - DAY -  
as the three other cars pull away and only Joanna, Bobby and Charmaine are left.

CHARMAINE  
I'm no expert, granted, but I didn't think it was that bad . . .

Joanna and Bobby are still in shock.

148 continued.

CHARMAINE

Look, at least there was a meeting, some people got together, how bad could it be?

JOANNA (without turning)  
Tell her.

149 BOBBY -  
lets go with the definitive Bronx cheer.

150 INT. LIVING ROOM - JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
Walter working on some papers. Joanna restless.

JOANNA (finally)  
Walter . . .

WALTER (doesn't look up)  
Just one sec.

JOANNA (waits)  
Would you mind if I went out tonight?

WALTER  
Out where?

JOANNA  
Just out. I just feel depressed . . . Thought maybe I'd take the camera and see . . . maybe I'll see something . . .

WALTER  
Yeah, sure. I'll listen out for the kids.

JOANNA  
I won't be long.

She leans over and kisses him on the forehead.

JOANNA  
It's not you. I'm fond of you.

WALTER  
I'm fond of you too.

She goes. Walter looks thoughtful.

151 EXT. GREENFIELD HILLS - NIGHT -  
the picture book church and meeting house.  
Joanna walking around - her car parked  
nearby - looking at the buildings.

152 ANOTHER STREET AREA - NIGHT -  
shop windows, illuminated. Joanna.  
Now and then she looks at something and  
views it through the camera she carries.

153 INT. LIVING ROOM - JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
Ed Wimpiris, Ike Mazzard and Claude  
sitting more or less in a row. Walter  
moves to them and hands some of his Polaroids  
around - one to each man. They look at  
them intently, as though handling something  
rare.

154 NEAR THE MENS' ASSOCIATION - NIGHT -  
Joanna, head tilted, looking at something. She  
steps back and uses the hood of the car to  
rest her Nikon on, angling herself across the  
hood like a pool player.

155 WHAT SHE IS AIMING AT -  
is a floodlight. Madonna standing to one side  
of a slight hill beside the Mens' Association.

156 BACK TO JOANNA -  
she focuses carefully, setting the camera to the  
'B' mark, when suddenly a searchlight smashes  
across scene, flaring our lens. Joanna throws  
a hand across her eyes and loses balance.

157 GO TO THE SOURCE OF THE SEARCHLIGHT -  
a police car. One man inside it, talking on the phone.

158 JOANNA -  
still blinded, gets out of the beam. It is  
killed again and from out of the darkness comes  
the young and good looking policeman we have  
seen before.

POLICEMAN

Hey, I'm sorry about that, lady.  
The truth is there's something  
wrong with that stupid light.  
I keep reporting it, 'cause you're  
the fourth person I've almost  
blinded this month.

JOANNA

You certainly scared me.

158 continued.

POLICEMAN  
You okay and everything?

JOANNA  
Yes, thanks, I'll manage.

She retrieves her camera which slid off the hood in her panic.

POLICEMAN  
Hey, that's some camera.

JOANNA  
I hope it still is.

POLICEMAN  
Didn't damage it, did it?

JOANNA  
It's been dropped before.

POLICEMAN  
What is it?

JOANNA  
Nikon.

POLICEMAN  
Nikon, huh. Gee, they're expensive.

By now he's very close to her, closer, perhaps than he needs to be and there's sexual tension.

JOANNA (fires shutter)  
No, it's fine. Sounds fine.

POLICEMAN  
Can you really take stuff at night?

JOANNA  
Time exposures.

Beyond them, during this scene, we shall see the Mens' Association, and at the beginning of the scene there will have been lighted windows. One by one they have gone dark. We hear the call sign on the car radio.

158 continued.

POLICEMAN

Well once again, my 'pologies.  
Goodnight, lady.

JOANNA

Goodnight.

He crosses back to his car, gets in and drives off. Joanna examines the lens on her camera again, looks around. It is very quiet. She gets into her own car, starts the engine.

159 WIDER ANGLE -  
as she makes a turn she brings us back again onto the darkened shape of the Mens' Association.

160 INT. PHARMACY - DAY -

Bobby and Joanna making purchases. Bobby suddenly nudges Joanna. Joanna looks in the direction indicated.

161 WE SEE WHAT THEY SEE -

Mrs Cornell behind one of the counters, serving a customer with perfume. She is young with a stupendous body.

162 BACK TO BOBBY AND JOANNA -

Joanna perplexed, no idea what she is supposed to have seen, since the scene looks very ordinary. Bobby mouths 'That is Mrs Cornell'

MR.CORNELL (Off Screen)  
You all through?

They turn and now we see the husband. He is considerably older than his wife and no Charles Atlas.

BOBBY

Thanks, yes. Just these.

He rings up the purchases, Bobby pays. Another nudge to Joanna when Mr.Cornell turns away to put her purchases in a bag. But again Joanna doesn't read her.

MR.CORNELL

Have a nice day, ladies.

They exit.

163 EXT. THE PHARMACY - DAY -  
as they come out of the shop.

163 continued.

BOBBY

I was trying to tell you . . .

JOANNA

Yes, what was all that about?

BOBBY

That was Frank.

JOANNA

Frank?

BOBBY

The house! Remember? That was Frank and that was Mrs Frank. . . . Oh, God, there, yes .

(the penny drops for Joanna)

Exactly. Now how about that, for a Stepford twosome?

WELCOME WAGON LADY (Off Screen)  
Hi!

She enters shot, cheery as ever, arms full of cakes.

WELCOME WAGON LADY

Have you heard . . . it's just spreading like wildfire . . . a black family's moving into town . . . d'you think that's good . . . I think it's good, well, I don't know if I think it's good, so much as I think it's natural, considering, well, I mean, after all, we are the most liberal town around.

JOANNA

Stepford?

BOBBY

Liberal?

WELCOME WAGON LADY

Well, sure, we had the first Japanese restaurant in Fairfield County. And we had the first women's club to ask any of those liberation ladies to come lecture.

163 continued.

JOANNA

There's no womens club here.

WELCOME WAGON LADY

Well there was. I went to a meeting once - there must have been fifty of us there.

BOBBY

Where the hell are they?

164 EXT. CAROL'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY -  
everything spick and span, with Carol  
folding laundry.

CAROL

Some of them just moved away,  
but I think most of us just  
plain got bored. I know I did.

165 JOANNA AND BOBBY -  
sipping coffee, watching as she folds.

CAROL

We disbanded, oh, years  
ago now . . . We weren't  
accomplishing anything useful.

BOBBY

You mean useful like folding  
laundry.

CAROL (not remotely insulted)  
I like seeing my family look  
nice.

JOANNA

Look, we got this from the  
library . . .

She holds out a photostat of an old  
newspaper. Reads from it.

JOANNA

Carol . . . Carol, listen, it  
says you were President of  
that club . . . and you were  
young . . . that means drive,  
that means brains . . .

CAROL

I only took the post because  
nobody else would . . .

JOANNA

You've adjusted out here, then?

165 continued.

Joanna is upset and can't conceal it.

JOANNA

Please, tell me, what you're doing . . . it's enough?

CAROL

Enough for me maybe's not enough for you, Joanna, but Ted's getting some recognition on his scientific research now. I give him a good home, I think that helps. My kids are doing the best they've ever done in school . . . I'm here a lot, I think that helps . . . The Womens Club was time and pressure and no rewards. I'm off the booze, God knows that's better . . . It's none of your business, but our sex life is better, too.

She looks straight at them.

CAROL

I'm sorry to disappoint you, but I'm happy.

We hold on her.

166. CAROL'S HOUSE - DAY -  
as Joanna and Bobby scuff their way towards the road, on their way back to Joanna's house.

BOBBY (after pause)

Y'know . . . . Maybe we're the crazy ones.

JOANNA

Don't say that . . . We're not . . . we're fine.

But they are both very troubled.

167 NEW YORK - EAST 70'S - DAY -  
and it is noisy. Pick up Joanna in the crowds. She carries a portfolio, looks up to check a number, then goes inside a fancy looking place.

168 INT. THE ATKINSON GALLERY -  
which is primarily for photographers and a new show is being hung.

169 ANOTHER PART OF THE GALLERY -  
where Joanna is following the owner of the  
gallery around.

JOANNA

I can see how busy you are,  
Mr. Atkinson, but I did call.

Mr. Atkinson is tired and harried. He  
rubs his eyes.

ATKINSON

Oh, yes, you're the Mrs  
Everstadt.

JOANNA

Eberhart, and . . .

ATKINSON

. . . I'm sorry, Eberhart,  
and I should have said 'no'  
on the phone, this is just  
a frazzling time for me,  
would you be upset if we did  
it some other time?

Joanna has begun to untie her folder,  
but now she stops.

JOANNA

Of course not, whatever's  
convenient, it was silly of  
me, they're just things of  
mine, they'll wait.

Something in the urgency of her voice  
makes Atkinson relent.

ATKINSON

Spread out a few, why don't you,  
that can't hurt anybody, can it?

Joanna doesn't need any second bidding  
and immediately places some of her  
work on the racks lining one wall.

JOANNA

See, we've just moved out of  
the city and I felt I must  
keep working and have my  
work looked at so I don't  
turn into a complete vegetable  
because I'm scared I'm going to  
lose whatever something I've  
got which I think I hope is  
something . . .

169 continued.

She places the last one.

JOANNA  
D'you understand?

ATKINSON  
No.

JOANNA  
Not that one, it stinks.

We shall be looking at her efforts at the same time as Atkinson.

JOANNA  
Oh, don't pay any attention to that either, it stinks too.

She looks at him anxiously.

JOANNA  
But they get better.

Mr. Atkinson betrays nothing.

JOANNA  
That one's kind of better . . .  
don't you think?

170 MR. ATKINSON -  
purses his lips.

171 EXT. NEW YORK STREET AGAIN - DAY -  
lunch-time crowds. When they part we  
see Joanna, full of emotion, clutching her  
portfolio, looking for a taxi. Traffic  
wipes her from view and we

171 JUMP CUT TO  
the rear of a moving truck, going we don't  
know where. And in the back of the truck  
is a wire cage and in the cage is Fred,  
Joanna's dog, and we hold on him for a  
few seconds, encush for him to register  
and be recognised before cutting to

172 EXT. STEPPFORD - DAY -  
and peace and quiet again, as Joanna arrives  
back and parks the car. Gets out, reaches  
into the back for her portfolio and goes  
inside the house.

173 INT. KITCHEN - JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY -  
she looks weary. Pours herself a glass  
of water, looks down and sees that the dog  
bowl is empty of water and fills that.

JOANNA  
Fred.

Puts the bowl down again.

JOANNA  
Freddie, where are you?

Nothing. She looks at her wrist watch. Goes  
outside again.

JOANNA  
Freddie, come on, we'll  
go and fetch the girls.

174 EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY -  
she looks to where Freddie is usually tied  
up, but he is nowhere to be seen. She doesn't  
think too much of it. Gets back into  
the car and backs out.

175 EXT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - DAY -  
we can see all the children whooping it up  
in the background. Bobby reading a book in  
a deck chair. Joanna drives up.

BOBBY  
How did it go?

JOANNA  
What? . . . Oh, well he  
hated them . . . And I  
was inclined to agree,  
I don't know what made  
me take them . . . Still . . .  
The girls bring Fred over?

BOBBY  
Not that I know of.

JOANNA  
Oh, shoot. That's all I  
need. . . He's got no  
collar, nothing. Can I  
leave the kids a bit longer  
while I go look?

BOBBY  
Sure. I'll go with you.  
They're happy.

175 continued.

She walks with Joanna back to the car.

BOBBY

We'll find him. Tell me  
more about that fink in  
the gallery . . .

176 EXT. STEPFORD ROAD - DAY -

Joanna driving slowly, she and Bobby looking  
both sides of the road. They are in the  
vicinity of Charmaine's house.

177 INSIDE JOANNA'S CAR - DAY -

and we drive right past Charmaine's and  
we should just get enough of an impression  
of what is going on around the tennis court,  
but it doesn't register immediately and  
Joanna drives on for maybe another thirty  
yards before she applies the brakes.

JOANNA

Did you see what I saw?

BOBBY (turning)

You found him?

JOANNA

No. Back there. At  
Charmaine's.

Bobby turns right round.

BOBBY

My God!

Joanna reverses. Brings up back alongside  
the tennis court and now we see workmen  
and a bulldozer and they are ripping up the  
court.

178 JOANNA AND BOBBY - CLOSER -

they are stunned, as well they might be.

179 JOANNA -

pulls into Charmaine's driveway. They hurry  
out and enter the house.

180 INT. LIVING ROOM - CHARMAINE'S HOUSE - DAY -

Charmaine. And glimpsed beyond her an  
Ike Mazzard drawing, framed.

CHARMAINE

. . . Ed hated tennis but he  
never said a word . . all  
he wanted to do was please  
me . . .

180 continued.

And she looks terrific, better than we have ever seen her before. And all the time she is talking we can hear the sound of the tennis court being murdered outside.

CHARMAINE

. . . well, I want to please him now and am I ever going to . . .

181 JOANNA AND BOBBY -  
cannot believe it, they just cannot believe it.

CHARMAINE

. . . See, we spent this weekend at this beautiful Inn up in Vermont, just Ed and me, talking things through . . . we parked Merrill with some friends, the Fishers . . . and we had such a terrific time, I can't get my mind operating. Besides I'm just swamped with work . . .

BOBBY  
Work?

CHARMAINE

I fired Nettie. It was really just the being alone with Ed that did it. I hope I've got a little perspective on my life now. All I ever thought about before was me . . . well, I'm here to tell you, that's all over

She is thrilled by the revelation, and she moves now to the picture window to view her handiwork outside.

CHARMAINE

. . . That was the only really open part, so to heck with the court I said . . . Ed always hankered after a heated pool and now he's going to get it . . .

181 continued.

She waves to somebody outside.

182 GO TO HER EYELINE -

and there is good old Ed, waving back, standing alongside the bulldozer, just as pleased as punch.

CHARMAINE (off screen)  
. . I almost lost my  
man through my selfishness,  
make sure you don't do the  
same . . .

183 INT. RESTAURANT (HERITAGE VILLAGE) - DAY -

inside the amazing shopping complex. Joanna and Bobby seated at a table. They look down into the shopping area.

BOBBY  
Okay, I've been doing a little research and a lot of thinking and I know it's going to sound crazy, but if you laugh at what I say, I'll jump off here right after.

Joanna, eating, merely nods.

BOBBY  
You remember hearing about the Texas tranquilizer?  
(Joanna shakes her head)  
It was in Time . . I cut it out.

She fumbles in her purse and brings out a small clipping.

BOBBY  
Issue dated October 4, 1971.  
'71, right? It's about why there's no murders in El Paso.

(reads)  
See, this scientist has a theory that there's something in the water in El Paso . . It comes from deep wells and it's got some chemical tranquilizer and well . . read it.

She hands the clipping across.

183 continued.

BOBBY

You see? Dallas is over twice as big as El Paso, but that year there were 242 murders in Dallas and only 13 in El Paso . . .

Joanna studies the cutting.

BOBBY (lowering her voice)  
Joanna . . . that's what I think's going on in Stepford. I think there's something in the water that turns us into hausfraus. Drones - whatever you want to call it . . . Charmaine changed, Carol van Sant changed, and so did all those other women's club members.

JOANNA

Well . . .

BOBBY

It can't be all coincidence!

Joanna stares at her.

184 EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE STEPFORD - DAY - and we are passing some very modern factories. They have a forbidding look to them. Impersonal. Who knows what goes on inside those high-wire fences, with their guard dogs and private security guards?

185 BOBBY AND JOANNA - INSIDE BOBBY'S CAR - DAY - and Bobby is pointing with one hand as they pass.

BOBBY

Just look at those places . . . electronics, computers, aerospace junk . . . labs, who knows? And they must all be dumping their garbage into Stepford River and it could find it's way to us . . . It just could!

186 EXT. SIDE OF RESERVOIR - DAY -  
pastoral setting. Bobby's car parked.  
The girls outside it.

BOBBY

Look, the six o'clock news  
scares me every night . . .  
what's so far out with  
my theory?

JOANNA

All right, why don't we  
write the state environment  
people and ask them to  
run a check on the water  
in this reservoir?

BOBBY

Joanna, I worked for a government  
agency and I promise you that  
if they're really good and way  
above average and we write them  
a letter, the most we can hope  
for is that they'll lose it.  
They give courses in mis-filing  
at those places. . . I think  
our only shot is to take a  
specimen of the water ourselves  
and have it analyzed. Except  
I don't know any trustworthy  
chemists . . . they're all  
members of the stinking  
Mens' Association, have to be.

JOANNA (from nowhere)  
I lost my virginity to a  
trustworthy chemist . . .

BOBBY

No kidding?

JOANNA

His name was Leonard Bernstein,  
and I kept asking him in the  
chem lab which did he like more,  
composing or conducting and  
how come he didn't look the way  
he did on television. Or I'd  
beg him to sing me a medley from  
West Side Story . . .

Momentarily Bobby has forgotten the  
water.

186 continued.

JOANNA

It was a great gag while it lasted . . . Some nights I wouldn't let him touch me until he'd explained first what a concerto was . . . it really drove him crazy . . . We were both seniors at N.Y.U. and believe me, it wasn't passion, it was love.

BOBBY

Why didn't you marry him?

JOANNA

Who wanted to be a chemist's wife? I thought Walter was gonna end up Perry Mason.

BOBBY (fingersnap)

I'll look in the phone book and if he's still in New York, he's our man.

JOANNA

Are you outta your mind? I can't just call him up and say 'Hi, I used to be Joanna Ingalls, you deflowered me twelve years ago, would you check my water?' . . .

187 CLOSE SHOT - LEONARD - DAY -  
and he has worn well. He smiles now  
at

188 JOANNA -

who is sitting on the other side of his desk, with Bobby on another chair, and they are inside a small, glass-walled office set within a larger room. Beyond the glass we can see the rest of the lab and much activity.

LEONARD

The final gaschromatograph reading's should be through in a minute or so.

188 continued.

JOANNA

Thank you, Leonard, this  
is really very good of you.

LEONARD

Don't be silly . . . Long  
time.

BOBBY

Twelve years.

Leonard flicks at this, but his eyes go  
back to Joanna.

LEONARD

You married a dentist, wasn't  
that it? You happy?

*Bobby Lawyer*

JOANNA

A lawyer, and yes. Very.

LEONARD

Good. Good.

JOANNA

Are you married?

LEONARD

Going on nine years. And yes,  
very.

Knock at the door, and then a young  
Technician enters and places some papers  
in front of Leonard, together with a  
small phial of water. Leonard studies  
the report.

LEONARD

I can say right off the  
bat that there's water in  
your water.

Joanna and Bobby are both very tense,  
hanging on his words.

LEONARD

What can I tell you girls?  
I wouldn't want to drink  
too much of it, but it is  
water . . .

BOBBY

Can't you be more specific?

188 continued.

During this next exchange, Leonard scribbles a few words on the report.

LEONARD

Yes, but not without knowing more precisely what I'm supposed to find. . .

(to Joanna)

There's nothing. Take a look.

He pushes the report across the desk.  
Joanna picks it up.

189 CLOSER -

the report itself might as well be written in hieroglyphics. But across the top Leonard has written 'I'm not happy either.'

190 JOANNA -

totally surprised, she manages to sit back in her chair.

191 LEONARD -

watches her. Takes the report back again.

BOBBY

Well, can you go any way to confirming my suspicions?

LEONARD

Which are?

BOBBY (a burst)

Every mother in Stepford loves housework and I thought it might be something in the water.

Leonard looks at her for a long time.

LEONARD (to Joanna)

Where did you find her?

BOBBY

It's not funny.

LEONARD

No, you're right, that was rude of me. . . Look, Mrs. Markowe, I can categorically state there is no such thing as a cleaner compeller. . . If there was we could patent it, win the Nobel Prize and retire.

192 BOBBY -

she knows he's right, but she hates to  
have to admit it.

BOBBY (standing)  
I guess we're going.

She goes outside.

LEONARD

I'm sorry. Tell her that.

Joanna nods. She moves to the door.

LEONARD

Hey, we blew it, didn't we?

JOANNA

I don't know, Leonard . . .  
It's hard to be smart.

193 EXT. WOODED AREA - DAY -  
streaking past.

194 INT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY -

silence. Bobby is clearly distraught.  
Finally, looking out of the window, she  
speaks.

BOBBY

I don't care what anybody says,  
I'm not gonna end up like  
those pan scrubbers . . . I'm  
getting the hell out of  
Stepford. I'll ask Dave tonight  
and we'll move.

(she turns to Joanna)

Hey, and you move too, you  
can't break up a team like us,  
we're the best thing since  
Laurel and Hardy, will you  
think about it?

195 JOANNA -

is concentratins on her driving, but you can  
tell, she is thinking about it.

196 THE COUNTRYSIDE -

as they flash by, is just idyllic. Now we  
begin to hear Joanna's voice over, carefully  
reading Claude's list of words . . .

196 continued.

JOANNA (off screen)  
Zone . . Zoned . . Zoo . .  
Zoological . . Zoologist . .  
Zoology . . Zoom . .

197 INT. LIVING ROOM - JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
we find her reading into Claude's tape machine.

JOANNA  
Zoot suit. Zulu.

She has come to the end and flips the  
folder shut. Switches off the machine.

JOANNA  
And that's that, Cl-cl-Claude.

198 INT. MAIN BEDROOM - JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
Walter working in bed, and by now of course  
the room is more or less finished. Joanna  
comes in.

JOANNA  
I finally finished.

WALTER  
Um. When was that?

Joanna looks at him, hesitates, then  
sits on the bed near to him.

JOANNA  
Walter . . would you  
move?

WALTER  
Um-hmm.

He scrootches over a few inches. Joanna,  
in spite of the seriousness of what she's  
into, can't help laughing.

WALTER  
What? What'd I say?

JOANNA  
I meant move, leave Stepford.

That registers.

WALTER  
Joanna, baby, we just reached  
Stepford. . . You that  
unhappy?

198 continued.

JOANNA (nods)  
Is it everything you  
expected?

WALTER (slowly)  
No, but I didn't want to  
be the one to admit it  
first. . . it was my idea  
to come here. You think the  
men are dull, well I think  
the women are likewise. . .

JOANNA  
You're right, I agree with  
you, that's why I wanna  
move.

WALTER  
I do think the area's pretty  
though, and good for the  
kids. . . Maybe Norwood  
or Eastbridge. . . Okay,  
let's move.

He goes back to his papers.

JOANNA  
You mean that's all there is  
to it? I just had to ask?  
Shouldn't we at least fight  
or something?

WALTER  
Well, I don't want to leave  
tonight, Joanna. . . Where  
are we now, June? Jesus,  
I'm swamped with work. . .

He rifles through the mass of papers.

WALTER  
How about, you look around  
and let's plan on leaving  
in August. . . that way the  
kids can be all settled again  
before school starts. . .

Joanna leans right in, crushing the  
papers, to put her arms round him.

198 continued.

WALTER

Darling, these papers are  
in sequence . . . You're  
crushing Mr. Ziegler's  
Will . . .

JOANNA

I'll make you a beneficiary . . .

199. INT. A SMALL ROOM - DAY -  
which is crammed to over-flowing with  
bric-a-brac that defies description.  
~~(We have already found the location).~~

FEMALE VOICE OVER

Let me just gather my bits  
and pieces together and  
we'll go take a look . . .  
I've sorted out some really  
fancy houses for you . . .  
just darling.

And we reveal where we are and who  
is talking to who.

200 MRS KIRGASSA -  
is a realtor and she goes with the  
extraordinary room. Joanna and Bobby  
are perching somewhere, terrified to  
move in case they break something.

MRS KIRGASSA

We all set? I thought  
we'd all go in one car.

She gathers up various foldenstanding  
stuffs them in a large bag. They move out.

MRS KIRGASSA

I think these little talks  
are valuable beforehand,  
you get to know the people  
you're looking for, get  
to know their tastes, I  
mean not everybody has the  
same taste . . .

The room is emptied of people. but  
it should stay in the memory for a long  
time.

201 EXT. A SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY -  
kind of modern mixed with Colonial. Kind  
of ghastly. But busy, loaded with mothers  
and kids.

202 MRS KIRGASSA'S CAR -  
pauses so that Joanna and Bobby can take a  
look. Mrs Kirgassa, let it be said, is  
an appalling driver.

MRS KIRGASSA  
This here's Eastbridge  
Centre, brand spanking new,  
yet still respecting the  
values of the past.

BOBBY  
Look at all those fat  
sloppy housewives  
aren't they wonderful?

She suddenly shouts out of the window.

BOBBY  
I love you!

Mrs Kirgassa gives her a look, guns  
the pedal and they make a kangeroo exit.

203-

204 A SERIES OF HOUSES - DAY -  
as Joanna and Bobby are shown around.

205 FINALLY ANOTHER HOUSE -  
smaller than the others, but very odd and  
reeking with charm.

206 THE THREE WOMEN -  
getting out of Mrs Kirgassa's car.

MRS KIRGASSA  
This here's a soft one  
thirty five, but you'll  
hafta get a contractor  
or be real good with your  
hands, it needs lotsa work.

She trots off ahead of them.

MRS KIRGASSA  
They keep the key in the  
garage . . .

206 continued.

BOBBY

Dave's real good with his hands - I thought he was going to throttle me when I told him we were going house hunting. He almost cancelled the Plaza.

JOANNA

What's the Plaza?

BOBBY

The first time I let Dave seduce me was in mid-June in the Plaza hotel - we'd been to theatre and he faked me up into a room and, what the hell, you've got to lose it some time, right?

JOANNA

I hope so.

BOBBY

Anyway, every year mid-June he books that room and we go theatre some Saturday and spend the night and recapture our past. It's corny, but you got to humor your husband sometime, right?

207 MRS KIRGASSA -  
has found the key. She waves it.

MRS KIRGASSA  
Yoo-hoo.

208 JOANNA AND BOBBY -  
start to walk towards the house.

BOBBY

Listen I never asked anybody anythin' this horrible, but would you keep my three sons, and two dogs, it's just for the night, they can sleep on the floor, they'll bring their sleeping bags, and I promise I'll keep your kids whenever you and Walter want to take off.

208 continued.

JOANNA

Yeah . . it is a horrible  
thing . . but okay . .  
the girls'll love having  
the dogs at least . .  
ever since poor old Fred  
departed they've been on  
at me . . I don't know  
about Walter, though . .

209 INT. JOANNA'S KITCHEN - DAY -  
Walter, huddled off to one side, trying to  
read his beloved New York Times and obviously  
in a good deal of agony. It's breakfast time  
and Bobby's three boys and Kim and Amy are  
sitting at the table, and the dogs are jumping  
around, and Joanna is trying to make enough  
pancakes to feed the army, and it is very  
noisy.

210 EXT. THE BACK YARD AREA - JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY -  
garden sprinklers going and all the kids running  
through the spray and having a hell of a time.  
The dogs are joining in. The sun is shining  
and it's all happening.

211 JOANNA -

tidying the house, rolling up sleeping bags.  
She hears the noise from the yard, looks  
out of a window and suddenly dashes from  
the room.

212 EN ROUTE -

she grabs her Nikon, checks that she has  
some film in it and moves outside.

213 SHE IS CAREFUL -

not to let the kids become aware of her  
and stays well back and starts shooting  
film, and she's very excited, we can tell  
that.

214 INT. THE DARKROOM -

Joanna working, very preoccupied, prints  
everywhere.

215 WALTER -

outside the closed darkroom door. Worn to  
a shadow of his former self.

WALTER

The corpse of Walter  
Eberhart requests a word with  
you.

215 continued.

He listens. Nothing.

WALTER

Joanna. I played Monopoly with them, I didn't pass Go and I didn't collect -and I played Backgammon and Scrabble with the goddam kids, and what am I supposed to do now?

JOANNA (from inside)

Walter, you had seven years of college, use your brains . . I'm sorry, but I'm on to something, and I think maybe it's the best I've ever done and I've got to stay with it if it takes all night and it will.

WALTER

But how do I amuse them?

JOANNA

I amuse them seven days a week - they all know Sesame songs, have a sing-a-long.

WALTER

A sing-a-long, Jesus.

He totters away.

216 INT. HALLWAY - JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT - greeting Dave and Bobby. They've both come from the city, both wear raincoats, look neat and well.

WALTER

Joanna - the cavalry . .

Bobby's kids streak into view, followed by the barking dogs.

DAVE

Walter, what do I owe you?

(to the boys)  
Now take it easy troops.

The boys rush out to the car, calling out their goodbyes and thank you's to Joanna.

216 continued.

DAVE  
You got a minute?

He beckons Walter outside. As he passes  
Bobby she leans forward for a kiss.

BOBBY  
Thanks for everything.  
We'll do the same for you  
anytime.

Walter hesitates - which is odd maybe -  
finally he gives her a peck on the cheek.

WALTER  
It went terrific. No  
problems.

He goes, and Bobby takes Joanna to one  
side.

JOANNA  
You survive okay?

BOBBY  
Best it's ever been. I  
caught him in a money  
spending mood and you  
can't let those chances slip  
by. . . That's not being  
fair. Dave was fantastic.  
We ate great food, we went  
great places. . . But the  
greatest was in the sack.  
I tell you, without worrying  
whether the kids are coming  
in, it's another world.

217 CUT OUTSIDE -  
Bobby leaves and gets in the car and it  
drives off.

JOANNA (as they go inside)  
Maybe we should try that. . .  
Why didn't you want to kiss  
her?

WALTER (casually)  
Oh, I don't know. . . I guess.  
I don't go for all that cheek  
kissing. . . it's so damn show-  
business, if you ask me.

The front door closes.

218 INT. ATKINSON GALLERY - CLOSE - DAY -  
Mr. Atkinson looks up, surprised.

219 JOANNA -  
she's exhausted looking, advancing  
towards him, with a large envelope of  
prints.

JOANNA  
Mr. Atkinson, I've been at  
these since Saturday just  
about non-stop because I  
had to get them into some  
kind of shape for you to see  
because I just think they  
are an improvement and you've  
just got to think so too . . .

She starts to produce her work and  
they are prints of the children playing  
in the water sprinklers in the garden -  
and she has treated them in an imaginative  
way, both in the taking and in the printing.

JOANNA  
. . . see I just realized something  
-I'm doing all the talking, I  
know, but these are my little  
girls and those are somebody  
else's, my best friends little  
boys, and you've got to tell  
me, am I crazy? Aren't those  
good? Please say something,  
I don't care . . no, I do care,  
don't say anything bad . .

MR. ATKINSON (very slowly)  
These are . . really . . quite  
good.

JOANNA  
You're not saying that because  
you're frightened I might be  
a crazy lady?

MR. ATKINSON  
Clearly you are a crazy lady,  
but clearly again, these are nice.

JOANNA  
Wait a minute - before you said  
good. 'Really quite good' you said.  
Good is better than nice, are  
you changing your mind?

219 continued.

JOANNA

See, how can I explain? It's not just them, it's all of us women, that's all we really want, just to be invited to splash around in the water along with the boys.

MR. ATKINSON

All right, Mrs Eberhart, you've worked yourself into a state, the results are lovely . . . Don't get upset again. 'Lovely' is better than good . . . but was it worth it? What d'you want from it all, do you know?

JOANNA

I want . . . someday somewhere someone to look at something and say 'Hey, that reminds me of an Ingalls' . . . Ingalls was my maiden name . . . I guess I want to be remembered.

220 EXT. BOBBY'S HOUSE - DAY -

Joanna brakes to a sharp stop and leaps out. She rushes inside the house.

221 INT. HALLWAY - DAY -  
as she comes in.

JOANNA

It's me.

BOBBY (Off screen)  
Kitchen.

222 JOANNA crosses to the kitchen, going through the living room, where once again we should see a framed Ike Mazzard drawing in passing.

JOANNA (as she goes)  
Listen, I've just come from Atkinson's in New York and he loves my new stuff . . . no, not love maybe, but -

223 WE ARE INSIDE BOBBY'S KITCHEN NOW -  
and Robby is bent over raiding the icebox.

JOANNA

. . . he's genuinely interested  
in my work. The Gallery for  
photographers in New York!

BOBBY

That's wonderful, Joanna.

Bobby straightens up and turns and we  
see that she was not raiding the ice box,  
she was cleaning it.

224 AND WE GO TO JOANNA -  
as her expression changes and the enthusiasm  
dies on her face.

225 BACK TO BOBBY -  
smiling happily and she really looks  
terrific.

BOBBY

If you're going to tell me  
you don't like this dress I'm  
sticking my head right in the  
oven. Dave bought it for me  
for the weekend, he spent a  
ton on me, I told you that . . .  
How about the shape?

She turns sideways and her breasts  
seem larger, perfectly shaped.

BOBBY

Padded uplift bra . . . You  
know it's true what they say  
in the ads . . . Dave turned  
me loose in Bergdorf's and  
I went mad . . .

JOANNA

. . . Bobby . . .

BOBBY

At the Plaza some guy tried picking  
me up in the lobby, you know how long  
it's been since that happened?  
Of course, I did look terrific.

JOANNA

Bobby, we're not at the Plaza now  
- so why are you wearing all that  
make-up . . . you never used to  
clean the kitchen, much less wear makeup!

225 continued.

BOBBY

Admit it, Joanna, I was a joke.  
Dave works hard all day and  
what does he come home to?  
A slob . . . !

JOANNA

Bobby . . . it's got to you  
now.

BOBBY

Nothing's got me. I just  
want to look like a woman  
and have my house looking  
decent, too . . .

JOANNA

You're just like Charmaine . . .

BOBBY

Will, you stop!

JOANNA

You're not moving, either,  
are you?

BOBBY

Leave Stepford? Good schools,  
low taxes, clean air . . .

JOANNA

No . . . No, of course, you're  
right . . .

BOBBY

Shall I make us a nice pot of  
coffee . . . ?

JOANNA

No . . . I've really got to go .  
Goodbye, Bobby . . .

She is backing off towards the door.

BOBBY (calling after her)

Stop by anytime, I'll be here . . .

She looks around for a sponge and some  
cleanser and she is wiping down the  
fridge door.

226 JOANNA'S CAR - OUTSIDE BOBEY'S HOUSE - DAY -  
as she barrels it out.

227 CRASH SEQUENCE - DAY -  
we want this to be something different from  
the usual staged film crash. She is on familiar  
territory and merely going home - so this  
should never be a Stirling Moss affair with  
the heroine inexplicably doing eighty miles  
an hour and slamming a family car round the  
bends in a suicidal fashion.

228 JOANNA -  
is deeply disturbed, because this is the breaking  
point. People drive automatically over  
familiar ground, but if they are not thinking  
about their driving they do small things which  
are outside the normal.

229 SHE SHOULD SHOOT -  
one STOP sign, for instance. She has forgotten  
to fasten her seat belt, so let's have the  
buzzer sounding continuously. She ignores  
this.

230 A SCHOOL BUS AHEAD OF HER -  
stopped to let children off. Without thinking  
she passes the bus and it is only when she  
has gone past that

231 SHE REALISES -  
the enormity of what she has done, and what  
her action might have cost her - for in the  
driving mirror she can see children standing  
in the roadway.

232 SHE DRIVES ON -  
and she should talk to herself. We don't  
have to hear all the words.

233 SHE COMES TO THE INTERSECTION NEAR HER OWN HOUSE -  
and overshoots it. She is half-turned into  
Carol's driveway. Stops abruptly. Spins the  
wheels, maybe stalls the car and then, when she  
restarts it, misjudges and slams into the mail-box  
post.

234 SHE IGNORES THIS -  
and goes into her own driveway, and hits a  
child's bicycle that has been left left - this  
is nothing - but she doesn't stop in time and  
tears half a fender away and dents a side  
on a fence.

235 SHE STOPS -  
in tears. Fumbles to switch the engine off.  
Hunches over the wheel.

236 LATER - IN JOANNA'S KITCHEN -  
and Walter is pacing, his anger controlled,  
very much the husband trying to take a reasonable  
approach with an unreasonable wife at this  
point.

WALTER

. . . So, all right, you're  
upset, and you passed a  
school bus, and you dented  
the wagon . . . Bobby Markowe  
buys a new bra and I have  
to pay for a new mail box  
for the van Sants . . . so  
what? What're you talking  
about, Joanna?

JOANNA

Why can't you understand?  
Her kitchen was sparkling!

WALTER

Yeah, so you said. I really  
hate to come on heavy, Joanna,  
but what's that got to do  
with you going crazy?

JOANNA

It wasn't just that . . . it  
wasn't just anything . . . she's  
changed . . . and stop saying  
I'm crazy . . .

The two children put their head round the  
door.

KIM

Are you two fighting?

WALTER

No!

KIM

We don't like it when you fight.

WALTER

We're not fighting, we're just  
talking. Now outside and play.

He shushes them out again.

237 WALTER TURNS -  
back to Joanna after they have gone.

WALTER (very controlled now)  
This sure is terrific for them.  
I remember when my mother and  
father used to yell at each  
other . . . I don't want them  
to go through all that.

JOANNA

No, well nor do I . . . and I'm  
sorry, I've said I'm sorry  
about the car, I was panicked  
and upset . . .

WALTER

Yeah, well that's no big deal . . .  
it's the rest of it that bothers  
me, Joanna. I mean, look at  
it from my point of view . . .

JOANNA

Walter just let me say one thing  
. . . Bobby really has changed . . .  
believe me . . . everything I  
saw in her house looked like  
a TV commercial . . .

WALTER (louder again)

Good! She had to clean it sooner  
or later, it was a fucking pigsty.

He starts to pace again.

WALTER

When are things going to start  
sparkling around here, that's  
what I want to know . . . You  
see the way the kids were dressed?  
Ragamuffins! I work 80 hours a  
week, I live in a fucking great  
house and my kids look like they  
belong on welfare . . . if you  
paid a little more attention to  
your family and a little less  
to your goddam picture taking . . .

JOANNA (quickly)

. . . I'm getting the hell out of  
Stepford, Walter . . .

WALTER

I already said I'd move . . .

237 continued.

JOANNA

. . . Well, I'm not waiting 'til August. I'm getting us a house now and if it's hard on you, tough, and if it's hard on the kids, well I'll just ease up on my 'goddam picture taking' and stay around the house and believe me they'll survive, and that's what I'm talking about, Walter - surviving!

WALTER

Okay . . . okay . . . I've done nothing ever since I met you but try to give you everything you wanted and everything I wanted I gave in on . . .

JOANNA

Oh, I knew we'd come round to that!

WALTER

Tell me what I didn't give in on?

JOANNA

You were the one who wanted to move to Stepford, not me . . .

WALTER

What d'you mean?

JOANNA

I wasn't even consulted.

WALTER

I've said I'll move out. I'll take a loss on this shitty hovel we live in if need be . . . but there's a condition . . . one big condition, or we're going nowhere . . . You see somebody, you get help, see a psychiatrist.

238 JOANNA -  
stares at him. This isn't her husband.  
This is a stranger.

238 continued.

JOANNA

I'm fine, Walter, I don't  
need to see anybody . . .

WALTER

Well, you say you're fine,  
but me, I'd like another  
opinion, because I'm not all  
that anxious to move to Eastbridge  
and after four months there  
be told by my sweet wife we have  
to move again because she doesn't  
like the way her new neighbors  
keep their houses clean.

He circles again. Joanna watches him.

WALTER (he tries reason again)  
I'm not asking anything  
unreasonable . . . and I  
don't like asking it . . . but  
you want me to disrupt our  
lives for the second time in  
a few months on some fixation  
you've got . . . that's the  
unreasonable part, and you  
have to see that. You and me  
don't have to fight about it.  
We're going to move, it's only  
a few more weeks . . .

.(slight pause)  
Doesn't have to be anything  
dramatic . . . there's a couple  
of top notch guys right here  
in town . . . Just talk to  
one of them . . . They'd see  
you.

JOANNA

But I wouldn't see them . . .  
. . . If I see anybody . . . I'll  
find my own.

239 EXT. DOCTOR FANCHER'S HOUSE - DAY -  
Joanna and Doctor Fancher walking across  
the bridge from the house to the doctor's  
garden consulting room. This early dialogue  
is very relaxed and casual.

239 continued.

JOANNA

I'm here at my husband's insistence . . . We moved to . Stepford with our children . . . we were in Manhattan before then . . . oh, just a few months ago . . . and now I want to move out. . . . See, I've got nothing against the general area . . . but the women in Stepford just don't seem to be on the same wavelength . . .

DOCTOR FANCHER  
In what way?

JOANNA

They just seem to be interested in different things . . . things that don't figure as important in . . . in what I want to do with my life . . . I want to be . . . I am a photographer.

Doctor Fancher stands aside and motions her to enter the consulting room.

240 INT. GARDEN CONSULTING ROOM - DAY - as they enter. It is a pleasant room, comfortably furnished and a million light years away from anything clinical. Doctor Fancher sits in one comfortable chair, behind a table rather than a desk, and Joanna takes another chair.

DOCTOR

Well, that all seems straightforward. And your husband wanted you to see me . . . because . . . ?

JOANNA

He feels I'm being irrational. He says there's no certainty that I'd like Eastbridge, or someplace like that, any better. And he doesn't want to spend his life moving from one house to another.

240 continued.

DOCTOR FANCHER

Yes . . . understandable. But Stepford, I know, has a reputation for being unsocial, so I also understand why you might be unhappy there . . . I'd be unhappy there. . . Any move is traumatic, and a city to suburbs move, for a woman with interests other than purely family, can seem like a jaunt to Siberia . . . What would you think of, if I said Westport, Connecticut?

JOANNA

Writers . . . artists.

DOCTOR FANCHER

Um-hmm. Now, you have no reason to know this, but Truro, Massachusetts is a sort of elephants graveyard for psychoanalysts. Perhaps Stepford is heaven for the House and Garden types . . . One person tells another, some don't like it and leave, others that do like it, arrive . . . Westport didn't always have writers . . I mean, they didn't breed from an original pair.

JOANNA

I understand.

DOCTOR FANCHER

I'm not surprised . . you're obviously a very bright young woman.

They both sit there and there is a totally unexpected and very, very long silence . . . we might almost think that both actors have forgotten their lines . . it goes on that long.

DOCTOR FANCHER (finally, gently)  
What does surprise me is that you come all this way to talk to me . . and then you don't talk to me.

241 JOANNA -

and we have a second pause, as long as  
the actress needs, because she starts to  
cry silently.

JOANNA (when she can)  
I think the men are behind it.

DOCTOR FANCHER  
What men?

JOANNA  
All of them . . . all of them  
in the Association . . . Walter,  
everyone . . . The women don't  
. . . can't . . . arrive in  
Stepford loving housework . . .  
They change once they get there.  
I think the men make them  
change.

DOCTOR FANCHER  
How would they do that?

JOANNA  
I don't know . . . They . . .  
the men, they . . . Oh, Jesus,  
this is so awful, if I'm wrong  
I'm insane and if I'm right  
it's worse than if I'm wrong . . .

242 DOCTOR FANCHER -

knows when to speak, when to ask questions,  
and when not to ask questions.

243 JOANNA AGAIN -

and this time it starts to come out in  
a burst.

JOANNA  
I don't know anything exactly . . .  
what they do, but they draw our  
pictures and they tape our voices  
and the women all look neat and  
pretty and there's one man, he's  
a druggist, he runs the pharmacy,  
and he's nothing, I mean he's  
old and fat and ugly but his  
wife is just breathtaking and  
by accident once I heard them  
making love and she was carrying on  
incredibly like he was some God's  
gift and Charmaine changed in four  
months and ripped up her tennis  
court . . .

244 AND IMPERCEPTIBLY -  
establishlight change, during this scene,  
the light outside fading, as I move in  
closer and closer on Joanna through this  
long speech.

JOANNA

. . . and Bobby, my best  
friend changed in four months  
and that's what convinced me  
that's how long I've been in  
Stepford, four months, and I  
don't know what's going on,  
I just know that something's  
wrong and my time is coming . . .

245 DOCTOR FANCHER -  
doesn't speak until she is convinced  
that Joanna has completely finished.

DOCTOR FANCHER

You're terribly frightened,  
aren't you?

Joanna nods her head, 'yes'.

DOCTOR FANCHER  
Can you sleep?

Joanna nods her head, 'no.'

DOCTOR FANCHER  
Well, that's easy, we can  
take care of that . . . And  
we'll see a lot of each other,  
and you can talk some more . . .  
See, it's unfortunate, but  
but I have to go away for a  
few days, something I can't  
put off at this short notice . . .  
but when I'm back . . . we can talk.

JOANNA  
No!

DOCTOR FANCHER  
No you don't want to talk or what?

245 continued.

JOANNA

I won't be here when you get back, don't you see? It's going to happen before then, don't ask me to explain it, I just know. There'll be somebody with my name and she'll cook and clean like crazy, but she won't take pictures and she won't be me . . .

246 DOCTOR FANCHER -  
gets up.

DOCTOR FANCHER

All right, now listen . . . I'll give you a prescription which you have filled . . . then gather up your children and get the hell away. Don't tell your husband, don't tell anyone, just go. Wherever you feel safe. D'you have family?

JOANNA

They're dead.

DOCTOR FANCHER

Well just drive and stop somewhere. Then in a few days . . . I'll be back on the tenth . . . you ring me and I'll come to you and we'll sort this thing out . . . how does that sound?

JOANNA

Yes, yes, all right.

DOCTOR FANCHER

I don't think you're crazy. I think you're very upset and I want to know why . . . and we'll find that out when you're away from whatever it is that made you this way . . . I'm not a magician, I'm just somebody to talk to . . . sometimes I think that's all anybody needs . . . somebody to talk to . . .

247 IT IS QUITE DARK IN THE ROOM -  
as they leave it, and the skies outside  
convey something ominous.

248 EXT. CORNELL'S PHARMACY - DAY -  
Joanna's car parked outside.

249. INT. CORNELL'S PHARMACY - DAY -  
Joanna waiting at the counter for her prescription.  
There is a faint sound of clinking glass and  
she turns to see what is causing it.

250 MRS CORNELL -  
dusting the perfume case. She lifts each  
bottle expertly, deftly, dusts it, dusts  
the shelf beneath the bottle, then puts  
the bottle back, clinking glass. She becomes  
aware that Joanna is watching her and smiles.

MRS CORNELL  
It's a knack.

251 JOANNA -  
nods at her, but does not return the smile.

MR. CORNELL (off screen)  
Here we are.

She turns to him.

MR. CORNELL  
Is that it? Need any perfume?

JOANNA  
No. No, thank you.

MR. CORNELL  
We got a special. Honey,  
show Mrs Eberhart that new  
one. Give me the tester.

Mrs Cornell dutifully trots forward  
with a bottle.

JOANNA  
No, thank you.

MR. CORNELL  
Try it.

He sprays some on the back of his wife's  
hand. She holds it out for Joanna to sniff.

251 continued.

MR.CORNELL

Isn't that something? Only just came in and it's going to go out real fast. It's a steal at fifty five without tax. That's a full ounce.

JOANNA (she wants to get out)  
No, thank you.

MR.CORNELL (to his wife)  
Smells good on you, honey.  
Aren't I a lucky man?

JOANNA

Yes. This whole town is full of lucky men.

Mr.Cornell only has eyes for his wife, and Joanna exits. It has started to rain outside. Large drops, falling from a heavy sky.

252 INT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - DAY MOVING INTO EVENING -  
Joanna comes in and goes to the foot of the stairs.

JOANNA  
Amy, Kim!

The house is quiet. She calls again.

JOANNA  
Amy! You both up there?

253 WALTER -  
he seems to appear suddenly, standing in the doorway to another room. He has a drink in his hand.

WALTER  
They're not here.

JOANNA  
Where are they?

WALTER  
Not here. I told you. They're with friends. They're fine.

JOANNA  
Which friends?

WALTER  
They're fine.

253 continued.

He drinks, takes a step towards her.

WALTER

How was your visit. Did  
she fix you up?

JOANNA

Walter, I'm taking the kids  
away . . . where are they,  
are they at Bobby's?

WALTER

They're fine, I keep telling  
you. . . And we don't want  
you getting upset again . .  
why don't you go and lie down.

JOANNA

Stop talking to me in that  
tone of voice . . . I do not  
want to lie down, I want my  
children!

WALTER

Lie down, Joanna . . . now!

JOANNA

Don't tell me what to do, you  
bastard!

254 WALTER -

and suddenly he explodes, throwing the glass  
somewhere, and he grabs Joanna and begins to  
move her bodily up the stairs. She fights  
back, but he's stronger and, more than that,  
he's possessed, and both of them are shouting  
- the whole scene is shockingly unreal.

255 JUST WHEN WE THINK WALTER IS WINNING -  
Joanna changes tactics and instead of  
fighting to get down the stairs, she launches  
her body up and the move takes Walter off  
balance, he slips and falls and this is her  
chance - she runs into their bedroom and  
slams the door. We hear it being locked.  
Walter, who has recovered quickly, is just  
too late.

WALTER

Joanna, open this goddam  
door!

256 ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE DOOR -  
Joanna does nothing.

WALTER (Off screen)  
You are crazy . . . it's  
true.

He tries the door handle once again, then  
there is a pause and then we hear his footsteps  
recede. Joanna waits, listening. It appears  
to be genuine he has gone downstairs.

257 THE LIGHT ON THE TELEPHONE -  
suddenly blinks.

258 JOANNA'S EYES -  
Go to it. She stares at the instrument. Then  
unlocks the door and opens it a fraction.  
Listens again. Vague sound of Walter talking  
below. She slips out of the room.

259 ON THE STAIRS -  
Joanna coming down one step at a time.

260 WALTER -  
talking on the phone.

WALTER (into phone)  
. . . yeah, she's locked  
in upstairs now . . . So  
what do I do? . . . What?  
Oh . . . that's how you do  
it, huh. . . Right . . .  
right . . .

261 JOANNA -  
crossing the danger area now, where he might,  
conceivably be able to see her. Then she  
moves fast, through the kitchen and out into  
the night. We see and hear that it is raining  
hard now.

262 INT. BOBBY'S KITCHEN - NIGHT -  
still raining. Bobby busy cleaning. There  
is a sound outside the kitchen door and she  
stops work and looks round.

263 THE KITCHEN DOOR OPENS -  
and Joanna is standing there, her hair soaked.

BOBBY  
Just look at you, for heaven's  
sake.

263 continued.

JOANNA

Bobby . . . Bobby, listen . .

BOBBY

You need a fresh perked  
cup of coffee . .

JOANNA

No . . . No, I don't want . .  
I just want my children.

BOBBY

Well, they're not here . . Dave's  
working late so I shooed my  
boys off with friends to give  
myself a chance to do some real  
cleaning . . Whoever told  
you Kim and Amy were here?

JOANNA

No one . . no one. . but  
the night they changed you, I  
kept your kids . . it just  
seemed logical . .

BOBBY

Changed me? What's that mean?

JOANNA

I don't know . . I really  
don't. . . Bobby, stop  
doing that and look at me . .  
say I'm right . . you are  
different, your figure's  
different, your face . .  
what you talk about . . all  
this . . it is different .

BOBBY

Well, that, yes, and it's  
wonderful . . Why don't you  
change your mind and have  
a cup?

JOANNA

Bobby . . what does archaic  
mean?

BOBBY

Ar-kay-ic?

JOANNA

Yes.

263 continued.

BOBBY  
I don't know.

JOANNA  
Think. You used to know.  
When we visited Marie Axhelm  
and she was ironing, she didn't  
know but you did . . .

BOBBY  
Did I? Well, I forgot . . .  
how d'you want it?

JOANNA  
It wasn't on the word list,  
was it, Bobby?

BOBBY (busy)  
This is a new blend and  
very mild . . . D'you want  
cream?

JOANNA (grabs a kitchen knife)  
I bleed -

BOBBY  
- oh, that's right, you take it  
black -

JOANNA  
- cut me and I bleed -

She runs the blade across a finger and  
we see blood. She holds it up.

JOANNA  
Do you bleed?

BOBBY  
Why look at your hand . . .

JOANNA  
No, you look!

And with that she pushes the knife into  
Bobby's stomach and it goes in a long way.  
Bobby doesn't react - for a long moment she  
just stands there.

BOBBY  
Oh . . . Joanna . . .

Joanna watches, beyond terror now.

263 continued.

BOBBY

. . . that was deep . . How  
could you do a thing like  
that?

She pulls at the knife and it comes out  
and she turns and turns on the water faucet  
over the sink and washes the knife and  
it is now that we see bloody water washing  
away down the drain.

BOBBY

How could you do a thing like  
that?

She hangs the knife on a magnetic board  
- there is no sense that she feels any pain.

BOBBY

How could you do a thing  
like that? When I was  
just going to give you coffee.

She takes coffee cups out of a cupboard  
and drops them on the floor, one after  
the other.

BOBBY

When I was just going to  
give you coffee.

And now she starts bumping into things,  
but her voice doesn't alter, she is talking  
just as calmly as ever.

BOBBY

When I was just going to  
give you coffee . . I  
thought we were friends . .

She bumps her head against something,  
walks into something else, and Joanna backs  
away - beyond everything now - and Bobby  
keeps stumbling, walking into things with  
her legs now.

BOBBY

I thought we were friends . .

264 EXT. JOANNA'S HOUSE - NIGHT -  
still raining. Walter and the Young Policeman  
on the porch. A siren starts to go off, sounding  
through the rain.

POLICEMAN

I'm telling you, Walter,  
it's all gonna be okay.  
We've got the phones jammed,  
the alarm is out, the roads  
are blocked off . . . everybody's  
out looking for her . . . so  
don't panic, we'll find her.

He moves to his car and drives off.

265 WALTER -  
watches him go, then turns and goes inside  
the house.

266 INSIDE THE HALLWAY -  
we follow him across to the living room.

267 INT. THE LIVING ROOM -  
he crosses the room to refill his glass, and  
we'll fool everybody - hinting at a place  
where somebody might be hidden, waiting for  
him - but when the moment comes it comes  
from the wrong direction. Joanna appears  
and she just backhands him with the fire  
poker and he flies backwards and we don't  
see much of him ever again, but we should  
know that his face is a mess.

JOANNA

Where are they? I  
want my children you son  
of a bitch!

She stands over him looking down, and he's  
moaning and all we hear, half-hear, the only  
clue we and Joanna get is a bubbled "Association"  
and then she brings the poker down again.

268 EXT. THE NEWS' ASSOCIATION - NIGHT -  
and it's still raining and at first it seems  
like an unrelated shot and then something moves  
and we realise that Joanna has been standing  
there looking at the building with us, and  
now she begins to move slowly forward. We go  
with her, the building looming larger until  
at last we are standing with her outside a  
door.

269 INT. THE MENS' ASSOCIATION - NIGHT - and surprisingly the front door isn't locked and Joanna comes slowly forward, and from the beginning we shall be aware of the rain drumming on glass a long way away, and we won't be able to place the sound at this moment. She walks forward and the camera pulls back, back, back and some comes into an enormous area and high above her the rain is beating down on the rotunda glass roof.

270 WE DWARF HER - shooting from the top of the enormous staircase, so that she is a small figure below, but apart from the relative sizes there is nothing else in the building that causes immediate alarm. And then we hear it - barely audible at first above the noise of the rain - another sound - coming and going - a kid's cry - and it could be either Kim or Amy.

271 EXTREME CLOSE UP - JOANNA - her eyes go to the top of the stairs. She listens.

272 SHE MOVES TOWARDS THE FOOT OF THE STAIRS - listens there again, and this time we hear the sound again, and it is a child crying. She starts to mount the stairs.

273 HIGH ANGLE - bringing her up the stairs to the next floor and a balcony runs round the well of the hallway. From the balcony there are arches, and beyond the arches corridors leading off.

274 CLOSER AGAIN - as she turns and looks, first one way and then the other. Listening. The cry comes again and she thinks she has it located and she moves in that direction, through one of the arches

275 TOWARDS A PARTICULAR DOOR - and she has guessed correctly, for this is where the cries originate and now, away from the rotunda roof, the sound of the rain is not so loud and we can hear the distinct cry - it is a child calling 'Mommee'.

276 SHE DOESN'T HESITATE -  
she goes to this door and flings it open.

277 WE ARE INSIDE COBA'S ROOM -  
which we will have seen earlier in the scene  
with Walter.

278 A TAPE MACHINE -  
is running and every so often it goes 'Mommee'.  
Standing beside it is Coba. Relaxed, just  
as though he had been waiting for her.

279 JOANNA -  
stands there, her eyes flicking from the  
tape-recorder, to Coba, back to the tape recorder.

280 COBA -  
as he presses a switch on the machine and  
stops it.

COBA  
Hello, Joanna . . . what a  
lot of worry you've caused  
everybody . . . Poor Walter's  
been very concerned . . .

JOANNA  
Where - are - my - children?

COBA  
The first time I met you,  
I knew you were a good mother.  
They're quite safe . . . having  
a lovely evening with Charmaine.  
She was thrilled to have them.  
What have you got in your hand  
there?

He is totally relaxed, his voice is without  
menace. We see that Joanna is still holding  
the poker.

COBA  
You're not going to need that.  
It isn't like that at all.  
You've got quite the wrong idea.  
You've had the wrong idea all  
the time . . .

He puts the lid on the tape machine. She  
never takes her eyes off him.

280 continued.

COBA

. . . It's nothing like you imagine. It's just another stage . . . Think about it like that and there's nothing to it . . .

JOANNA

Why?

COBA

Why? Yes, that's a fair question. . . Deserves an answer . . . Because we found out . . . we found a way of doing it . . . and it's just perfect, perfect for us and perfect for you. Now, you're a very good subject . . . perhaps the best we've had, you were brighter than most . . . D'you mind if I make a call?

He starts to dial.

COBA

See, think about it the other way round . . . wouldn't you like to have some perfect stud waiting on you around the house, praising you, servicing you, whispering how your sagging flesh was beautiful, no matter how you looked . . . Excuse me.

Whoever he is calling answers the phone.

COBA (into phone)

Everything's fine. . . Just as I said . . . aren't I always right? Yes, I'll take care of it from now . . . Everybody can go home.

He hangs up.

280 continued.

COBA

That's all there is . . . So  
why don't we get it over?

And now he takes a step towards her. She  
grips the poker more firmly.

COBA

You hurried us a little.  
We weren't quite ready for  
you, if you want to know the  
truth . . .

She hurls the poker at him. Then turns  
and runs. He easily avoids the poker and  
walks after her, turning the lights off  
in the room when he goes.

281 JOANNA -

races down one of the corridors. She  
opens the first door she comes to - inside  
it is just an ordinary dull room.

282 COBA -

walks, never runs. He has all the time in  
the world.

283 BACK TO JOANNA -

she runs to another door and opens that.  
Again a nothing room. No test tubes. No  
mad scientist's laboratory. Just a room.

284 COBA -

continues walking after her.

285 SHE RACES -

round the balcony. The rain above beats down.  
She tries another route, down another corridor.  
Comes to another door. Opens it quickly -  
but it leads nowhere. Looks back.

286 SHE CAN SEE COBA -  
walking towards her and

287 SHE IS OFF AGAIN -

and down another corridor and this time there  
are no doors leading off, just a door at the  
end. She hesitates, but Coba is behind her,  
taking his time, but getting nearer and she  
has to go to that door at the end, there is  
no other way.

288 AT THE DOOR -

one last hesitation, and then she turns the handle in panic, opens it and

285 SHE IS INSIDE HER OWN BEDROOM -

an exact replica, mounted within a large, baroque room which we can see above the dummy false walls.

288 SHOCK CUT OF FRED -

the dog, lying on Joanna's bed, and he turns and snarls at her.

289 AND JOANNA IS TRAPPED -

in the half open doorway, with Coba coming on slowly behind her, and she has to come further into the room, into the false room where all her things have been duplicated, so that it might be a nightmare from which she will soon awake.

290 SHE TURNS -

because of another sound, and it comes from the room leading off the false bedroom and she moves towards this because she has no choice. And we take her round the corner of the 'set' and now she is in her own bathroom and she stops dead.

291 WHAT SHE IS LOOKING AT -

is herself, in profile, and it's a perfect profile, no trace of wrinkles, everything ironed out, the sort of perfection you only see in the ads when Richard Avedon takes the photograph. And the rest is perfect too, the breasts are young and firm and full. And as we look, she turns and we have a flash of something horrible - because part of the other side of the face is unfinished, they haven't put all the skin on and we can see the exposed muscle, and small veins beneath the eye socket.

292 JOANNA -

she screams, but we hear no sound, and behind her Coba is approaching in a blur and that's it, that's the cut to:

293 A BIZARRE SHOT -  
of rows upon perfect rows of soap powders  
and Easy-on Starch and cleansing fluids in  
Stepford supermarket and as we pull back  
and widen the shop and reveal the whole  
ordered super-abundance of it, the Stepford  
Wives begin to appear, doing their neat,  
quiet shopping with their neat, ordered kids.

294 HERE IS KIT SUNDERSEN -  
lovely as ever, and she passes Charmaine.

KIT  
Hello, Charmaine.

CHARMAINE  
Hello, Kit.

And we stay on Charmaine as she moves along  
the aisle making her selections. She passes  
a Black Couple and maybe, apart from the  
staff, the Black Husband is the only male  
around. His wife seems to be feisty and  
bright, rather like Joanna was at the  
beginning of the story. And Charmaine moves  
past and now Marie comes into view.

CHARMAINE  
Hello, Marie.

MARIE  
Hello, Charmaine.

And we follow Marie now and she leads us  
to Carol.

MARIE  
Hello, Carol.

CAROL  
Hello, Marie.

And now we are in another section, back to  
the soap section and two ladies are visible,  
shopping slowly and neatly. They are  
Bobby and Joanna, and they both look beautiful  
with great breasts and slim waists and  
neatly coiffed hair.

JOANNA  
Hello, Bobby.

BOBBY  
Hello, Joanna.

294 continued.

They both stop and examine soap powders.

BOBBY  
How are you?

JOANNA  
I'm fine. How are you?

BOBBY  
I'm fine. How are the  
children?

JOANNA  
Fine, and yours?

BOBBY  
Fine, fine.

They reach out and take identical packets  
of soap and then one goes one way and  
one the other.

295 EXT. THE SUPERMARKET - DAY -  
and it is a perfect day, and Joanna comes  
out and looks around and behind her a  
young clerk is wheeling her cart for her  
with all her purchases piled high. A car  
horn honks and she moves towards it.

296 AND THERE IS COBA -  
sitting in a brand new station wagon and  
beside him on the front seat are Kim and  
Amy.

COBA  
Open the door for Momme.

KIM  
Yes, Daddy.

And they open the door for their mother  
and she gets in beside them and they  
are just one big happy family. The young  
clerk quickly puts the purchases in the  
back and Coba drives out of the crowded  
parking lot and out into